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Alwoods

Case 85

POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF THE

AUTHOR

OF A

VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

V O L. III.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, NO. 72, ST. PAUL'S
CHURCH-YARD; AND G. G. AND J. ROBINSON,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1798.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Letters may possibly be found to contain the finest examples of the language of sentiment and passion ever presented to the world. They bear a striking resemblance to the celebrated romance of Werter, though the incidents to which they relate are of a very different cast. Probably the readers to whom Werter is incapable of affording pleasure, will receive no delight from the present publication. The editor apprehends

PREFACE.

that, in the judgment of those best qualified to decide upon the comparison, these Letters will be admitted to have the superiority over the fiction of Goethe. They are the offspring of a glowing imagination, and a heart penetrated with the passion it essays to describe.

To the series of letters constituting the principal article in these two volumes, are added various pieces, none of which, it is hoped, will be found discreditable to the talents of the author. The slight fragment of Letters on the Management of Infants, may be thought a trifle ; but it seems to have some value, as presenting to us with vividness the intention of the writer on

this

PREFACE.

this important subject. The publication of a few select Letters to Mr. Johnson, appeared to be at once a just monument to the sincerity of his friendship, and a valuable and interesting specimen of the mind of the writer. The Letter on the Present Character of the French Nation, the Extract of the Cave of Fancy, a Tale, and the Hints for the Second Part of the Rights of Woman, may, I believe, safely be left to speak for themselves. The Essay on Poetry and our Relish for the Beauties of Nature, appeared in the Monthly Magazine for April last, and is the only piece in this collection which has previously found its way to the press.

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a 5

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ERRATA.

Page 10, line 8, *for* I write you, *read* I write to you.

— 20, — 9, *read* bring them to —.

— 146, — 2 from the bottom, after over, insert
a comma.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Two o'Clock.

MY dear love, after making my arrangements for our snug dinner to-day, I have been taken by storm, and obliged to promise to dine, at an early hour, with the Miss —s; the *only* day they intend to pass here. I shall however leave the key in the door, and hope to find you at my fire-side when I return, about eight o'clock. Will you not wait for poor Joan?—whom you will find better, and

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B

till:

till then think very affectionately of her.

Yours, truly,

* * * *

I am fitting down to dinner; so do not send an answer.

L E T T E R II.

Past Twelve o'Clock, Monday night,
[August.]

I OBEY an emotion of my heart, which made me think of wishing thee, my love, good-night! before I go to rest, with more tenderness than I can to-morrow, when writing a hasty line or two under Colonel ——'s eye. You can scarcely imagine with what pleasure I anticipate the day, when we are
to

to begin almost to live together; and you would smile to hear how many plans of employment I have in my head, now that I am confident my heart has found peace in your bosom.—Cherish me with that dignified tenderness, which I have only found in you; and your own dear girl will try to keep under a quickness of feeling, that has sometimes given you pain.—Yes, I will be *good*, that I may deserve to be happy; and whilst you love me, I cannot again fall into the miserable state, which rendered life a burthen almost too heavy to be borne.

But, good-night!—God bless you! Sterne says, that is equal to a kiss—yet I would rather give you the kiss into the bargain, glowing with gratitude to Heaven, and affection to you. I like the word affection, because it signifies

B 2

something

something habitual ; and we are soon to meet, to try whether we have mind enough to keep our hearts warm.

* * * *

I will be at the barrier a little after ten o'clock to-morrow*.—Yours—

L E T T E R I I I .

Wednesday Morning:

You have often called me, dear girl, but you would now say good, did you know how very attentive I have been to the ——— ever since I came to Paris. I am not however going to trouble

* The child is in a subsequent letter called the “ barrier girl,” probably from a supposition that she owed her existence to this interview.

EDITOR.

you

you with the account, because I like to see your eyes praise me ; and, Milton insinuates, that, during such recitals, there are interruptions, not ungrateful to the heart, when the honey that drops from the lips is not merely words.

Yet, I shall not (let me tell you before these people enter, to force me to huddle away my letter) be content with only a kiss of DUTY—you *must* be glad to see me—because you are glad—or I will make love to the *shade* of Mirabeau, to whom my heart continually turned, whilst I was talking with Madame —, forcibly telling me, that it will ever have sufficient warmth to love, whether I will or not, sentiment, though I so highly respect principle.—

Not that I think Mirabeau utterly devoid of principles—Far from it—and, if I had not begun to form a new the-

very respecting men, I should, in the vanity of my heart, have *imagined* that I could have made something of his—— it was composed of such materials—— Hush! here they come—and love flies away in the twinkling of an eye, leaving a little brush of his wing on my pale cheeks.

I hope to see Dr. —— this morning; I am going to Mr. ——'s to meet him, ——, and some others, are invited to dine with us to-day; and to-morrow I am to spend the day with ——.

I shall probably not be able to return to —— to-morrow; but it is no matter, because I must take a carriage, I have so many books, that I immediately want, to take with me.—On Friday then I shall expect you to dine with me—and, if you come a little before dinner, it is so long since I have
 2 seen

seen you, you will not be scolded by
yours affectionately

* * * *

LETTER IV*.

Friday Morning [September:]

A MAN, whom a letter from Mr —— previously announced, called here yesterday for the payment of a draft; and, as he seemed disappointed at not finding you at home, I sent him to Mr. ——. I have since seen him, and he tells me that he has settled the business.

So much for business!—May I venture to talk a little longer about less weighty affairs?—How are you?—I

* This and the thirteen following letters appear to have been written during a separation of several months; the date, Paris.

B 4 .

have

have been following you all along the road this comfortless weather; for, when I am absent from those I love, my imagination is as lively, as if my senses had never been gratified by their presence—I was going to say caresses—and why should I not? I have found out that I have more mind than you, in one respect; because I can, without any violent effort of reason, find food for love in the same object, much longer than you can.—The way to my senses is through my heart; but, forgive me! I think there is sometimes a shorter cut to yours.

With ninety-nine men out of a hundred, a very sufficient dash of folly is necessary to render a woman *piquante*, a soft word for desirable; and, beyond these casual ebullitions of sympathy, few look for enjoyment by fostering a
passion

passion in their hearts. One reason, in short, why I wish my whole sex to become wiser, is, that the foolish ones may not, by their pretty folly, rob those whose sensibility keeps down their vanity, of the few roses that afford them some solace in the thorny road of life.

I do not know how I fell into these reflections, excepting one thought produced it—that these continual separations were necessary to warm your affection.—Of late, we are always separating.—Crack!—crack!—and away you go.—This joke wears the fallow cast of thought; for, though I began to write cheerfully, some melancholy tears have found their way into my eyes, that linger there, whilst a glow of tenderness at my heart whispers that you are one of the best creatures in the world.—Pardon then the vagaries of a mind,
that

that has been almost "crazed by care," as well as "crossed in hapless love," and bear with me a *little* longer!—When we are settled in the country together, more duties will open before me, and my heart, which now, trembling into peace, is agitated by every emotion that awakens the remembrance of old griefs, will learn to rest on yours, with that dignity your character, not to talk of my own, demands.

Take care of yourself—and write soon to your own girl (you may add dear, if you please) who sincerely loves you, and will try to convince you of it, by becoming happier.

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER V.

Sunday Night.

I HAVE just received your letter, and feel as if I could not go to bed tranquilly without saying a few words in reply—merely to tell you, that my mind is serene, and my heart affectionate.

Ever since you last saw me inclined to faint, I have felt some gentle twitches, which make me begin to think, that I am nourishing a creature who will soon be sensible of my care.—This thought has not only produced an overflowing of tenderness to you, but made me very attentive to calm my mind and take exercise, lest I should destroy an object, in whom we are to have a mutual interest, you know. Yesterday—do not smile!—finding that I had hurt myself
by

by lifting precipitately a large log of wood, I sat down in an agony, till I felt those said twitches again.

Are you very busy?

—	—	—	—	—	—	—
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So you may reckon on its being finished soon, though not before you come home, unless you are detained longer than I now allow myself to believe you will.—

Be that as it may, write to me, my best love, and bid me be patient—kindly—and the expressions of kindness will again beguile the time, as sweetly as they have done to-night.—Tell me also over and over again, that your happiness (and you deserve to be happy!)

happy!) is closely connected with mine, and I will try to dissipate, as they rise, the fumes of former discontent, that have too often clouded the sunshine, which you have endeavoured to diffuse through my mind. God bless you! Take care of yourself, and remember with tenderness your affectionate

* * * *

I am going to rest very happy, and you have made me so.—This is the kindest good-night I can utter.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Friday Morning.

I am glad to find that other people can be unreasonable, as well as myself—for be it known to thee, that I answered thy *first* letter, the very night it reached me (Sunday), though thou couldst not receive it before Wednesday, because it was not sent off till the next day.—There is a full, true, and particular account.—

Yet I am not angry with thee, my love, for I think that it is a proof of stupidity, and likewise of a milk-and-water affection, which comes to the same thing, when the temper is governed by a square and compass.—There is nothing picturesque in this straight-lined

lined equality, and the passions always give grace to the actions.

Recollection now makes my heart bound to thee; but, it is not to thy money-getting face, though I cannot be seriously displeased with the exertion which increases my esteem, or rather is what I should have expected from thy character.—No; I have thy honest countenance before me—Pop—relaxed by tendernefs; a little—little wounded by my whims; and thy eyes glistening with sympathy.—Thy lips then feel softer than soft—and I rest my cheek on thine, forgetting all the world.—I have not left the hue of love out of the picture—the rosy glow; and fancy has spread it over my own cheeks, I believe, for I feel them burning, whilst a delicious tear trembles in my eye, that would be all your own, if a
grateful

grateful emotion directed to the Father of nature, who has made me thus alive to happiness, did not give more warmth to the sentiment it divides—I must pause a moment.

Need I tell you that I am tranquil after writing thus?—I do not know why, but I have more confidence in your affection, when absent, than present; nay, I think that you must love me, for, in the sincerity of my heart let me say it, I believe I deserve your tenderness, because I am true, and have a degree of sensibility that you can see and relish.

Yours sincerely

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Sunday Morning [December 29.]

You seem to have taken up your abode at H——. Pray fir! when do you think of coming home? or, to write very confiderately, when will buſineſs permit you? I ſhall expect (as the country people ſay in England) that you will make a *power* of money to indemnify me for your abſence.

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VOL. III.

C

Well!

Well! but, my love, to the old story—am I to see you this week, or this month?—I do not know what you are about—for, as you did not tell me, I would not ask Mr. —, who is generally pretty communicative.

I long to see Mrs. —; not to hear from you, so do not give yourself airs, but to get a letter from Mr. —. And I am half angry with you for not informing me whether she had brought one with her or not.—On this score I will cork up some of the kind things that were ready to drop from my pen, which has never been dipt in gall when addressing you; or, will only suffer an exclamation—“The creature!” or a kind look, to escape me, when I pass the slippers—which I could not remove from my *salle* door, though they are not the handsomest of their kind.

Be not too anxious to get money!—
for nothing worth having is to be purchased. God bless you.

Yours affectionately

* * * *

LETTER VIII.

Monday Night [December 30.]

My best love, your letter to-night was particularly grateful to my heart, depressed by the letters I received by ———, for he brought me several, and the parcel of books directed to Mr. ——— was for me. Mr. ———'s letter was long and very affectionate; but the account he gives me of his own
C 2 affairs,

affairs, though he obviously makes the best of them, has vexed me.

A melancholy letter from my sister ——— has also harrassed my mind—that from my brother would have given me sincere pleasure ; but for — —

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There is a spirit of independence in his letter, that will please you ; and you shall see it, when we are once more over the fire together.—I think that you would hail him as a brother, with one
 of

of your tender looks, when your heart not only gives a lustre to your eye, but a dance of playfulness, that he would meet with a glow half made up of bashfulness, and a desire to please the—— where shall I find a word to express the relationship which subsists between us?—Shall I ask the little twitcher?— But I have dropt half the sentence that was to tell you how much he would be inclined to love the man loved by his sister. I have been fancying myself fitting between you, ever since I began to write, and my heart has leaped at the thought!—You see how I chat to you.

I did not receive your letter till I came home; and I did not expect it, for the post came in much later than usual. It was a cordial to me—and I wanted one.

C 3

Mr.



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Mrs.

Mr. ——— tells me that he has written again and again.—Love him a little!—It would be a kind of separation, if you did not love those I love.

There was so much confederate tenderness in your epistle to-night, that, if it has not made you dearer to me, it has made me forcibly feel how very dear you are to me, by charming away half my cares.

Yours affectionately

* * * *

L E T T E R IX.

Tuesday Morning [December 31.]

THOUGH I have just sent a letter off, yet, as captain ——— offers to take one, I am not willing to let him go without a kind greeting, because trifles of this
fort,

fort, without having any effect on my mind, damp my spirits :—and you, with all your struggles to be manly, have some of this same sensibility.—Do not bid it begone, for I love to see it striving to master your features; besides, these kind of sympathies are the life of affection: and why, in cultivating our understandings, should we try to dry up these springs of pleasure, which gush out to give a freshness to days browned by care!

The books sent to me are such as we may read together; so I shall not look into them till you return; when you shall read, whilst I mend my stockings.

Yours truly

* * * *

LETTER X.

Wednesday Night [January 1.]

As I have been, you tell me, three days without writing, I ought not to complain of two: yet, as I expected to receive a letter this afternoon, I am hurt; and why should I, by concealing it, affect the heroism I do not feel?

I hate commerce. How differently must ——'s head and heart be organized from mine! You will tell me, that exertions are necessary: I am weary of them! The face of things, public and private, vexes me. The "peace" and clemency which seemed to be dawning a few days ago, disappear again. "I am fallen," as Milton said, "on evil days;" for I really believe
that

that Europe will be in a state of convulsion, during half a century at least. Life is but a labour of patience: it is always rolling a great stone up a hill; for, before a person can find a resting-place, imagining it is lodged, down it comes again, and all the work is to be done over anew!

Should I attempt to write any more, I could not change the strain. My head aches, and my heart is heavy. The world appears an "unweeded garden," where "things rank and vile" flourish best.

If you do not return soon—or, which is no such mighty matter, talk of it—I will throw your slippers out at window, and be off—nobody knows where.

* * * *

Finding

Finding that I was observed, I told the good women, the two Mrs. —s, simply that I was with child: and let them stare! and ———, and ———, nay, all the world, may know it for aught I care!—Yet I wish to avoid ———'s coarse jokes.

Considering the care and anxiety a woman must have about a child before it comes into the world, it seems to me, by a *natural right*, to belong to her. When men get immersed in the world, they seem to lose all sensations, excepting those necessary to continue or produce life!—Are these the privileges of reason? Amongst the feathered race, whilst the hen keeps the young warm, her mate stays by to cheer her; but it is sufficient for man to condescend to get a child, in order to claim it.—A man is a tyrant!

— You

You may now tell me, that, if it were not for me, you would be laughing away with some honest fellows in L—n. The casual exercise of social sympathy would not be sufficient for me—I should not think such an heartless life worth preserving.—It is necessary to be in good-humour with you, to be pleased with the world.

Thursday Morning:

I WAS very low-spirited last night, ready to quarrel with your cheerful temper, which makes absence easy to you.—And, why should I mince the matter? I was offended at your not even mentioning it.—I do not want to be loved like a goddess; but I wish to be necessary to you. God bless you*!

* Some further letters, written during the remainder of the week, in a similar strain to the preceding, appear to have been destroyed by the person to whom they were addressed.

LETTER

L E T T E R X I.

Monday Night.

I HAVE just received your kind and rational letter, and would fain hide my face, glowing with shame for my folly. —I would hide it in your bosom, if you would again open it to me, and nestle closely till you bade my fluttering heart be still, by saying that you forgave me. With eyes overflowing with tears, and in the humblest attitude, I intreat you.—Do not turn from me, for indeed I love you fondly, and have been very wretched, since the night I was so cruelly hurt by thinking that you had no confidence in me——

It is time for me to grow more reasonable, a few more of these caprices of sensibility would destroy me. I have,
in

in fact, been very much indisposed for a few days past, and the notion that I was tormenting, or perhaps killing, a poor little animal, about whom I am grown anxious and tender, now I feel it alive, made me worse. My bowels have been dreadfully disordered, and every thing I ate or drank disagreed with my stomach; still I feel intimations of its existence, though they have been fainter.

Do you think that the creature goes regularly to sleep? I am ready to ask as many questions as Voltaire's Man of Forty Crowns. Ah! do not continue to be angry with me! You perceive that I am already smiling through my tears— You have lightened my heart, and my frozen spirits are melting into playfulness.

Write the moment you receive this.

I shall

I shall count the minutes. But drop not an angry word—I cannot now bear it. Yet, if you think I deserve a scolding (it does not admit of a question, I grant), wait till you come back—and then, if you are angry one day, I shall be sure of seeing you the next.

—— did not write to you, I suppose, because he talked of going to H——. Hearing that I was ill, he called very kindly on me, not dreaming that it was some words that he incautiously let fall, which rendered me so.

God bless you, my love; do not shut your heart against a return of tenderness; and, as I now in fancy cling to you, be more than ever my support.— Feel but as affectionate when you read this letter, as I did writing it, and you will make happy, your

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Wednesday Morning.

I WILL never, if I am not entirely cured of quarrelling, begin to encourage "quick-coming fancies," when we are separated. Yesterday, my love, I could not open your letter for some time; and, though it was not half as severe as I merited, it threw me into such a fit of trembling, as seriously alarmed me. I did not, as you may suppose, care for a little pain on my own account; but all the fears which I have had for a few days past, returned with fresh force. This morning I am better; will you not be glad to hear it? You perceive that sorrow has almost made a child of me, and that I want to be soothed to peace.

One thing you mistake in my character,

rafter, and imagine that to be coldness which is just the contrary. For, when I am hurt by the person most dear to me, I must let out a whole torrent of emotions, in which tenderness would be uppermost, or stifle them altogether; and it appears to me almost a duty to stifle them, when I imagine *that I am treated with coldness.*

I am afraid that I have vexed you, my own ——. I know the quickness of your feelings—and let me, in the sincerity of my heart, assure you, there is nothing I would not suffer to make you happy. My own happiness wholly depends on you—and, knowing you, when my reason is not clouded, I look forward to a rational prospect of as much felicity as the earth affords—with a little dash of rapture into the bargain, if you will look at me, when we meet
again,

again, as you have sometimes greeted,
your humbled, yet most affectionate

* * * *

LETTER XIII.

Thursday Night.

I HAVE been wishing the time away, my kind love, unable to rest till I knew that my penitential letter had reached your hand—and this afternoon, when your tender epistle of Tuesday gave such exquisite pleasure to your poor sick girl, her heart smote her to think that you were still to receive another cold one.—Burn it also, my —; yet do not forget that even those letters were full of love; and I shall ever recollect, that you did not wait to be mollified by my penitence, before you took me again to your heart.

VOL. III.

D

I have

I have been unwell, and would not, now I am recovering, take a journey, because I have been seriously alarmed and angry with myself, dreading continually the fatal consequence of my folly.—But, should you think it right to remain at H—, I shall find some opportunity, in the course of a fortnight, or less perhaps, to come to you, and before then I shall be strong again.—Yet do not be uneasy! I am really better, and never took such care of myself, as I have done since you restored my peace of mind. The girl is come to warm my bed—so I will tenderly say, good night! and write a line or two in the morning—

Morning.

I wish you were here to walk with me this fine morning! yet your absence shall not prevent me. I have stayed at home too much; though,
when

when I was so dreadfully out of spirits,
I was careless of every thing.

I will now fally forth (you will go
with me in my heart) and try whether
this fine bracing air will not give the
vigour to the poor babe, it had, before
I so inconsiderately gave way to the
grief that deranged my bowels, and
gave a turn to my whole system.

Yours truly

* * * * *

D 2

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Saturday Morning.

THE two or three letters, which I have written to you lately, my love, will serve as an answer to your explanatory one. I cannot but respect your motives and conduct. I always respected them; and was only hurt, by what seemed to me a want of confidence, and consequently affection.—I thought also, that if you were obliged to stay three months at H—, I might as well have been with you.—Well! well, what signifies what I brooded over—Let us now be friends!

I shall probably receive a letter from you to-day, sealing my pardon—and I will be careful not to torment you with
my

my querulous humours, at least, till I see you again. Act as circumstances direct, and I will not enquire when they will permit you to return, convinced that you will hasten to your * * * *, when you have attained (or lost sight of) the object of your journey.

What a picture have you sketched of our fire-side! Yes, my love, my fancy was instantly at work, and I found my head on your shoulder, whilst my eyes were fixed on the little creatures that were clinging about your knees. I did not absolutely determine that there should be six—if you have not set your heart on this round number.

I am going to dine with Mrs. ——. I have not been to visit her since the first day she came to Paris. I wish indeed to be out in the air as much as I can; for the exercise I have taken

D 3

these

these two or three days past, has been of such service to me, that I hope shortly to tell you, that I am quite well. I have scarcely slept before last night, and then not much.—The two Mrs. ———s have been very anxious and tender.

Yours truly

* * * *

I need not desire you to give the colonel a good bottle of wine.

L E T T E R X V .

Sunday Morning.

I WROTE to you yesterday, my ———; but, finding that the colonel is still detained (for his passport was forgotten at the office yesterday) I am not willing to let

let so many days elapse without your hearing from me, after having talked of illness and apprehensions.

I cannot boast of being quite recovered, yet I am (I must use my Yorkshire phrase; for, when my heart is warm, pop come the expressions of childhood into my head) so *lightsome*, that I think it will not go badly with me.—And nothing shall be wanting on my part, I assure you; for I am urged on, not only by an enlivened affection for you, but by a new-born tenderness that plays cheerly round my dilating heart.

I was, therefore, in defiance of cold and dirt, out in the air the greater part of yesterday; and, if I get over this evening without a return of the fever that has tormented me, I shall talk no more of illness. I have promised the

D 4

little

little creature, that its mother, who ought to cherish it, will not again plague it, and begged it to pardon me ; and, since I could not hug either it or you to my breast, I have to my heart.— I am afraid to read over this prattle— but it is only for your eye.

I have been seriously vexed, to find that, whilst you were harrassed by impediments in your undertakings, I was giving you additional uneasiness.—If you can make any of your plans answer—it is well, I do not think a *little* money inconvenient ; but, should they fail, we will struggle cheerfully together—drawn closer by the pinching blasts of poverty.

Adieu, my love! Write often to your poor girl, and write long letters ; for I not only like them for being longer, but because more heart steals into them ;
and

and I am happy to catch your heart whenever I can.

Yours sincerely

* * * *

LETTER XVI.

Tuesday Morning.

I SEIZE this opportunity to inform you, that I am to set out on Thursday with Mr. ———, and hope to tell you soon (on your lips) how glad I shall be to see you. I have just got my passport, so I do not foresee any impediment to my reaching H——, to bid you good-night next Friday in my new apartment—where I am to meet you and love, in spite of care, to smile me to sleep—for I have not caught much rest since we parted.

You

- You have, by your tenderness and worth, twisted yourself more artfully round my heart, than I supposed possible.—Let me indulge the thought, that I have thrown out some tendrils to cling to the elm by which I wish to be supported.—This is talking a new language for me!—But, knowing that I am not a parasite-plant, I am willing to receive the proofs of affection, that every pulse replies to, when I think of being once more in the same house with you.—God blefs you!

Yours truly

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

Wednesday Morning.

I ONLY send this as an *avant-coureur*, without jack-boots, to tell you, that I am again on the wing, and hope to be with you a few hours after you receive it. I shall find you well; and composed, I am sure; or, more properly speaking, cheerful.—What is the reason that my spirits are not as manageable as yours? Yet, now I think of it, I will not allow that your temper is even, though I have promised myself, in order to obtain my own forgiveness, that I will not ruffle it for a long, long time—I am afraid to say never.

Farewell for a moment!—Do not
forget

forget that I am driving towards you in person ! My mind, unfettered, has flown to you long since, or rather has never left you.

I am well, and have no apprehension that I shall find the journey too fatiguing, when I follow the lead of my heart.—With my face turned to H—my spirits will not sink—and my mind has always hitherto enabled my body to do whatever I wished.

Yours affectionately

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

H—, Thursday Morning, March 12.

WE are such creatures of habit, my love, that, though I cannot say I was sorry, childishly so, for your going, when I knew that you were to stay such a short time, and I had a plan of employment; yet I could not sleep.—I turned to your side of the bed, and tried to make the most of the comfort of the pillow, which you used to tell me I was churlish about; but all would not do.—I took nevertheless my walk before breakfast, though the weather was not very inviting—and here I am, wishing you a finer day, and seeing you peep over my shoulder, as I write, with one of your kindest looks—when your eyes

eyes glisten, and a suffusion creeps over your relaxing features.

But I do not mean to dally with you this morning—So God bless you! Take care of yourself—and sometimes fold to your heart your affectionate

* * * *

LETTER XIX.

DO not call me stupid, for leaving on the table the little bit of paper I was to inclose.—This comes of being in love at the fag-end of a letter of business.—You know, you say, they will not chime together.—I had got you by the fire-side, with the *gigot* smoking on the board, to lard your poor bare ribs—and behold, I closed my letter without

out taking the paper up, that was directly under my eyes!—What had I got in them to render me so blind?—I give you leave to answer the question, if you will not scold; for I am

Yours most affectionately

* * * *

LETTER XX.

Sunday, August 17.

I have promised ——— to go with him to his country-house, where he is now permitted to dine—I, and the little darling, to be sure*—whom I cannot

* The child spoken of in some preceding letters, had now, been born a considerable time.

LETTERS.

help kissing with more fondness, since you left us. I think I shall enjoy the fine prospect, and that it will rather enliven, than satiate my imagination.

I have called on Mrs. ———. She has the manners of a gentlewoman, with a dash of the easy French coquetry, which renders her *piquante*.—But *Monsieur* her husband, whom nature never dreamed of casting in either the mould of a gentleman or lover, makes but an awkward figure in the foreground of the picture. ...

The H——s are very ugly, without doubt—and the house smelt of commerce from top to toe—so that his abortive attempt to display taste, only proved it to be one of the things not to be bought with gold. I was in a room a moment alone, and my attention was attracted by the *pendule*—A nymph was:

offering up her vows before a smoking altar, to a fat-bottomed Cupid (saving your presence), who was kicking his heels in the air.—Ah! kick on, thought I; for the demon of traffic will ever fright away the loves and graces, that streak with the rosy beams of infant fancy the *sombre* day of life—whilst the imagination, not allowing us to see things as they are, enables us to catch a hasty draught of the running stream of delight, the thirst for which seems to be given only to tantalize us.

But I am philosophizing; nay, perhaps you will call me severe, and bid me let the square-headed money-getters alone.—Peace to them! though none of the social sprites (and there are not a few of different descriptions, who sport about the various inlets to my heart) gave me a twitch to restrain my pen.

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I have

I have been writing on, expecting poor ——— to come; for, when I began, I merely thought of business; and, as this is the idea that most naturally associates with your image, I wonder I stumbled on any other.

Yet, as common life, in my opinion, is scarcely worth having, even with a *gigot* every day, and a pudding added thereunto, I will allow you to cultivate my judgment, if you will permit me to keep alive the sentiments in your heart, which may be termed romantic, because, the offspring of the senses and the imagination, they resemble the mother more than the father*, when they produce the suffusion I admire.— In spite of icy age, I hope still to see it,

* She means, "the latter more than the former."

EDITOR.

I

if

if you have not determined only to eat and drink, and be stupidly useful to the stupid—

Yours

* * * *

LETTER XXI.

H—, August 19, Tuesday.

I RECEIVED both your letters to-day—I had reckoned on hearing from you yesterday, therefore was disappointed, though I imputed your silence to the right cause. I intended answering your kind letter immediately, that you might have felt the pleasure it gave me; but ——— came in, and some

E 2

other

other things interrupted me; so that the ~~fine~~ vapour has evaporated—yet, leaving a sweet scent behind, I have only to tell you, what is sufficiently obvious, that the earnest desire I have shown to keep my place, or gain more ground in your heart, is a sure proof how necessary your affection is to my happiness.—Still I do not think it false delicacy, or foolish pride, to wish that your attention to my happiness should arise *as much* from love, which is always rather a selfish passion, as reason—that is, I want you to promote my felicity, by seeking your own.—For, whatever pleasure it may give me to discover your generosity of soul, I would not be dependent for your affection on the very quality I most admire. No; there are qualities in your heart, which demand my affection;
2 but,

but, unless the attachment appears to me clearly mutual, I shall labour only to esteem your character, instead of cherishing a tenderness for your person.

I write in a hurry, because the little one, who has been sleeping a long time, begins to call for me. Poor thing! when I am sad, I lament that all my affections grow on me, till they become too strong for my peace, though they all afford me snatches of exquisite enjoyment—This for our little girl was at first very reasonable—more the effect of reason, a sense of duty, than feeling—now, she has got into my heart and imagination, and when I walk out without her, her little figure is ever dancing before me.

You too have somehow clung round my heart—I found I could not eat my

E 3

dinner

dinner in the great room—and, when I took up the large knife to carve for myself, tears rushed into my eyes.—Do not however suppose that I am melancholy—for, when you are from me, I not only wonder how I can find fault with you—but how I can doubt your affection.

I will not mix any comments on the inclosed (it roused my indignation) with the effusion of tenderness, with which I assure you, that you are the friend of my bosom, and the prop of my heart.

* * * *

LETTER

L E T T E R XXII.

H—, August 20.

I WANT to know what steps you have taken respecting ——. Knavery always rouses my indignation—I should be gratified to hear that the law had chastised ——— severely ; but I do not wish you to see him, because the business does not now admit of peaceful discussion, and I do not exactly know how you would express your contempt.

Pray ask some questions about Tallien—I am still pleased with the dignity of his conduct.—The other day, in the cause of humanity, he made use of a degree of address, which I admire—

E 4

and

and mean to point out to you, as one of the few instances of address which do credit to the abilities of the man, without taking away from that confidence in his openness of heart, which is the true basis of both public and private friendship.

Do not suppose that I mean to allude to a little reserve of temper in you, of which I have sometimes complained! You have been used to a cunning woman, and you almost look for cunning—Nay, in *managing* my happiness, you now and then wounded my sensibility, concealing yourself, till honest sympathy, giving you to me without disguise, lets me look into a heart, which my half-broken one wishes to creep into, to be revived and cherished.—You have frankness of heart, but not often exactly that overflowing

flowing (*épanchement de cœur*), which becoming almost childish, appears a weakness only to the weak.

But I have left poor Tallien. I wanted you to enquire likewise whether, as a member declared in the convention, Robespierre really maintained a *number* of mistresses.—Should it prove so, I suspect that they rather flattered his vanity than his senses.

Here is a chatting, desultory epistle! But do not suppose that I mean to close it without mentioning the little damsel—who has been almost springing out of my arm—she certainly looks very like you—but I do not love her the less for that, whether I am angry or pleased with you.—

Yours affectionately

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XXIII*.

September 22.

I HAVE just written two letters, that are going by other conveyances, and which I reckon on your receiving long before this. I therefore merely write, because I know I should be disappointed at seeing any one who had left you, if you did not send a letter, were it ever so short, to tell me why you did not write a longer—and you will want to be told, over and over again, that our little Hercules is quite recovered.

* This is the first of a series of letters written during a separation of many months, to which no cordial meeting ever succeeded. They were sent from Paris, and bear the address of London.

Besides

Besides looking at me, there are three other things, which delight her—to ride in a coach, to look at a scarlet waistcoat, and hear loud music—yesterday, at the *fête*, she enjoyed the two latter; but, to honour J. J. Rousseau, I intend to give her a fash, the first she has ever had round her—and why not?—for I have always been half in love with him.

Well, this you will say is trifling—shall I talk about alum or soap? There is nothing picturesque in your present pursuits; my imagination then rather chuses to ramble back to the barrier with you, or to see you coming to meet me, and my basket of grapes.—With what pleasure do I recollect your looks and words, when I have been sitting on the window, regarding the waving corn!

Believe

Believe me, sage sir, you have not sufficient respect for the imagination—I could prove to you in a trice that it is the mother of sentiment, the great distinction of our nature, the only purifier of the passions—animals have a portion of reason, and equal, if not more exquisite, senses; but no trace of imagination, or her offspring taste, appears in any of their actions. The impulse of the senses, passions, if you will, and the conclusions of reason, draw men together; but the imagination is the true fire, stolen from heaven, to animate this cold creature of clay, producing all those fine sympathies that lead to rapture, rendering men social by expanding their hearts, instead of leaving them leisure to calculate how many comforts society affords.

If

If you call these observations romantic, a phrase in this place which would be tantamount to nonsensical, I shall be apt to retort, that you are embruted by trade, and the vulgar enjoyments of life—Bring me then back your barrier-face, or you shall have nothing to say to my barrier-girl; and I shall fly from you, to cherish the remembrances that will ever be dear to me; for I am
yours truly

* * * *

LETTER

L E T T E R XXIV.

Evening, Sept. 23.

I HAVE been playing and laughing with the little girl so long, that I cannot take up my pen to address you without emotion. Pressing her to my bosom, she looked so like you (*entre nous*, your best looks, for I do not admire your commercial face) every nerve seemed to vibrate to the touch, and I began to think that there was something in the assertion of man and wife being one—for you seemed to pervade my whole frame, quickening the beat of my heart, and lending me the sympathetic tears you excited.

Have I any thing more to say to you?
No; not for the present—the rest is all
flown

flown away ; and, indulging tenderness for you, I cannot now complain of some people here, who have ruffled my temper for two or three days past.

Morning.

YESTERDAY B—— sent to me for my packet of letters. He called on me before ; and I like him better than I did—that is, I have the same opinion of his understanding, but I think with you, he has more tenderness and real delicacy of feeling with respect to women, than are commonly to be met with. His manner too of speaking of his little girl, about the age of mine, interested me. I gave him a letter for my sister, and requested him to see her.

I have been interrupted. Mr. ———.
I suppose will write about business.
Public

Public affairs I do not descant on, except to tell you that they write now with great freedom and truth; and this liberty of the press will overthrow the Jacobins, I plainly perceive.

I hope you take care of your health. I have got a habit of restlessness at night, which arises, I believe, from activity of mind; for, when I am alone, that is, not near one to whom I can open my heart, I sink into reveries and trains of thinking, which agitate and fatigue me.

This is my third letter; when am I to hear from you? I need not tell you, I suppose, that I am now writing with somebody in the room with me, and — is waiting to carry this to Mr. —'s. I will then kiss the girl for you, and bid you adieu.

I desired you, in one of my other
letters,

letters, to bring back to me your barrier-face—or that you should not be loved by my barrier-girl. I know that you will love her more and more, for she is a little affectionate, intelligent creature, with as much vivacity, I should think, as you could wish for.

I was going to tell you of two or three things which displease me here; but they are not of sufficient consequence to interrupt pleasing sensations. I have received a letter from Mr. ——. I want you to bring ——— with you. Madame S—— is by me, reading a German translation of your letters—she desires me to give her love to you, on account of what you say of the negroes.

Yours most affectionately,

* * * *

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LETTER

LETTER XXV.

Paris, Sept. 28.

I HAVE written to you three or four letters; but different causes have prevented my sending them by the persons who promised to take or forward them. The inclosed is one I wrote to go by B——; yet, finding that he will not arrive, before I hope, and believe, you will have set out on your return, I inclose it to you, and shall give it in charge to ——, as Mr. —— is detained, to whom I also gave a letter.

I cannot help being anxious to hear from you; but I shall not harrafs you with accounts of inquietudes, or of cares that arise from peculiar circumstances.—I have had so many little
plagues

plagues here, that I have almost lamented that I left H——. —, who is at best a most helpless creature, is now, on account of her pregnancy, more trouble than use to me, so that I still continue to be almost a slave to the child.—She indeed rewards me, for she is a sweet little creature; for, setting aside a mother's fondness (which, by the bye, is growing on me, her little intelligent smiles sinking into my heart), she has an astonishing degree of sensibility and observation. The other day by B——'s child, a fine one, she looked like a little sprite.—She is all life and motion, and her eyes are not the eyes of a fool—I will swear.

I slept at St. Germain's, in the very room (if you have not forgot) in which you pressed me very tenderly to your heart.—I did not forget to fold my

F 2

darling

darling to mine, with sensations that are almost too sacred to be alluded to.

Adieu, my love ! Take care of yourself, if you wish to be the protector of your child, and the comfort of her mother.

I have received, for you, letters from _____ . I want to hear how that affair finishes, though I do not know whether I have most contempt for his folly or knavery.

Your own

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

October 1.

It is a heartless task to write letters, without knowing whether they will ever reach you.—I have given two to —, who has been a-going, a-going, every day, for a week past; and three others, which were written in a low-spirited strain, a little querulous or so, I have not been able to forward by the opportunities that were mentioned to me. *Tant mieux!* you will say, and I will not say nay; for I should be sorry that the contents of a letter, when you are so far away, should damp the pleasure that the sight of it would afford—judging of your feelings by my own.

F 3

I just

I just now stumbled on one of the kind letters, which you wrote during your last absence. You are then a dear affectionate creature, and I will not plague you. The letter which you chance to receive, when the absence is so long, ought to bring only tears of tenderness, without any bitter alloy, into your eyes.

After your return I hope indeed, that you will not be so immersed in business, as during the last three or four months past—for even money, taking into the account all the future comforts it is to procure, may be gained at too dear a rate, if painful impressions are left on the mind.—These impressions were much more lively, soon after you went away, than at present—for a thousand tender recollections efface the melancholy traces they left on my mind
—and

—and every emotion is on the same side as my reason, which always was on yours.—Separated, it would be almost impious to dwell on real or imaginary imperfections of character.—I feel that I love you ; and, if I cannot be happy with you, I will seek it no where else.

My little darling grows every day more dear to me—and she often has a kifs, when we are alone together, which I give her for you, with all my heart.

I have been interrupted—and must send off my letter. The liberty of the press will produce a great effect here—the *cry of blood will not be vain!*—Some more monsters will perish—and the Jacobins are conquered.—Yet I almost fear the last flap of the tail of the beast.

I have had several trifling teasing
F 4 incon-

inconveniencies here, which I shall not now trouble you with a detail of.—I am sending — back ; her pregnancy rendered her useless. The girl I have got has more vivacity, which is better for the child.

I long to hear from you.—Bring a copy of — and — with you.

— is still here : he is a lost man.— He really loves his wife, and is anxious about his children ; but his indiscriminate hospitality and social feelings have given him an inveterate habit of drinking, that destroys his health, as well as renders his person disgusting.—If his wife had more sense, or delicacy, she might restrain him : as it is, nothing will save him.

Yours most truly and affectionately

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

October 26.

MY dear love, I began to wish so earnestly to hear from you, that the sight of your letters occasioned such pleasurable emotions, I was obliged to throw them aside till the little girl and I were alone together; and this said little girl, our darling, is become a most intelligent little creature, and as gay as a lark, and that in the morning too, which I do not find quite so convenient. I once told you, that the sensations before she was born, and when she is sucking, were pleasant; but they do not deserve to be compared to the emotions I feel, when she stops to smile upon

upon me, or laughs outright on meeting me unexpectedly in the street, or after a short absence. She has now the advantage of having two good nurses, and I am at present able to discharge my duty to her, without being the slave of it.

I have therefore employed and amused myself since I got rid of —, and am making a progress in the language amongst other things. I have also made some new acquaintance. I have almost *charmed* a judge of the tribunal, R—, who, though I should not have thought it possible, has humanity, if not *beaucoup d'esprit*. But let me tell you, if you do not make haste back, I shall be half in love with the author of the *Marseillaise*, who is a handsome man, a little too broad-faced or so, and plays sweetly on the violin.

What

What do you say to this threat?—
 why, *entre nous*, I like to give way to
 a sprightly vein, when writing to you,
 that is, when I am pleased with you.
 “The devil,” you know, is proverbially
 said to be “in a good humour, when
 he is pleased.” Will you not then be
 a good boy, and come back quickly to
 play with your girls? but I shall not al-
 low you to love the new-comer best.

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

My heart longs for your return, my
 love, and only looks for, and seeks hap-
 pinefs with you; yet do not imagine
 that I childishly wish you to come back,
 before you have arranged things in
 such a manner, that it will not be ne-
 cessary for you to leave us soon again,
 or

or to make exertions which injure your constitution.

Yours most truly and tenderly

* * * *

P. S. You would oblige me by delivering the inclosed to Mr. —, and pray call for an answer.—It is for a person uncomfortably situated.

LETTER XXVIII.

Dec. 26.

I HAVE been, my love, for some days tormented by fears, that I would not allow to assume a form—I had been expecting you daily—and I heard that many vessels had been driven on shore during the late gale.—Well, I now see

2

your

your letter—and find that you are safe; I will not regret then that your exertions have hitherto been so unavailing.

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

Be that as it may, return to me when you have arranged the other matters, which — has been crowding on you. I want to be sure that you are safe—and not separated from me by a sea that must be passed. For, feeling that I am happier than I ever was, do you wonder at my sometimes dreading that fate has not done persecuting me? Come to me, my dearest friend, husband, father of my child!—All these fond ties glow at my heart at this moment, and dim my eyes.—With you an independence is desirable; and it is always within our reach, if affluence escapes us



ing her
would
old us
ly and

us—without you the world again appears empty to me. But I am recurring to some of the melancholy thoughts that have flitted across my mind for some days past, and haunted my dreams.

My little darling is indeed a sweet child ; and I am sorry that you are not here, to see her little mind unfold itself. You talk of “ dalliance ;” but certainly no lover was ever more attached to his mistress, than she is to me. Her eyes follow me every where, and by affection I have the most despotic power over her. She is all vivacity or softness — yes ; I love her more than I thought I should. When I have been hurt at your stay, I have embraced her as my only comfort—when pleased with you, for looking and laughing like you ; nay, I cannot, I find, long be angry

gry with you, whilst I am kissing her for resembling you. But there would be no end to these details. Fold us both to your heart; for I am truly and affectionately

Yours

* * * *

LETTER XXIX.

December 28.

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

I do, my love, indeed sincerely sympathize with you in all your disappointments.—Yet, knowing that you are well, and think of me with affection,

I

tion, I only lament other disappointments, because I am sorry that you should thus exert yourself in vain, and that you are kept from me.

——, I know, urges you to stay, and is continually branching out into new projects, because he has the idle desire to amass a large fortune, rather an immense one, merely to have the credit of having made it. But we who are governed by other motives, ought not to be led on by him. When we meet, we will discuss this subject— You will listen to reason, and it has probably occurred to you, that it will be better, in future, to pursue some sober plan; which may demand more time, and still enable you to arrive at the same end. It appears to me absurd to waste life in preparing to live.

Would it not now be possible to arrange

range your business in such a manner as to avoid the inquietudes, of which I have had my share since your departure? Is it not possible to enter into business, as an employment necessary to keep the faculties awake, and (to sink a little in the expressions) the pot boiling, without suffering what must ever be considered as a secondary object, to engross the mind, and drive sentiment and affection out of the heart?

I am in a hurry to give this letter to the person who has promised to forward it with ———'s. I wish then to counteract, in some measure, what he has doubtless recommended most warmly.

Stay, my friend, whilst it is *absolutely* necessary.—I will give you no tenderer name, though it glows at my heart,

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G

unless

unless you come the moment the settling the *present* objects permit.—*I do not consent* to your taking any other journey—or the little woman and I will be off, the Lord knows where. But, as I had rather owe every thing to your affection, and, I may add, to your reason, (for this immoderate desire of wealth, which makes ——— so eager to have you remain, is contrary to your principles of action), I will not importune you.—I will only tell you, that I long to see you—and, being at peace with you, I shall be hurt, rather than made angry, by delays.—Having suffered so much in life, do not be surprised if I sometimes, when left to myself, grow gloomy, and suppose that it was all a dream, and that my happiness is not to last. I say happiness, because

because remembrance retrenches all the dark shades of the picture.

My little one begins to show her teeth, and use her legs—She wants you to bear your part in the nursing business, for I am fatigued with dancing her, and yet she is not satisfied—she wants you to thank her mother for taking such care of her, as you only can.

Yours truly

* * * *

LETTER XXX.

December 29.

THOUGH I suppose you have later intelligence, yet, as ——— has just informed me that he has an opportunity

G 2

ty

ty of sending immediately to you, I take advantage of it to inclose you

How I hate this crooked business! This intercourse with the world, which obliges one to see the worst side of human nature! Why cannot you be content with the object you had first in view, when you entered into this wearisome labyrinth?—I know very well that you have imperceptibly been drawn on; yet why does one project, successful or abortive, only give place to two others? Is it not sufficient to avoid poverty?—I am contented to do my part; and, even here, sufficient to escape from wretchedness is not difficult to obtain. And, let me tell you, I have my project also—and, if you do not soon return, the little girl and I will take care of ourselves; we will not accept

accept any of your cold kindness—your distant civilities—no; not we.

This is but half jesting, for I am really tormented by the desire which ~~manifests~~ manifests to have you remain where you are.—Yet why do I talk to you?—If he can persuade you—let him!—for, if you are not happier with me, and your own wishes do not make you throw aside these eternal projects, I am above using any arguments, though reason as well as affection seems to offer them—if our affection be mutual, they will occur to you—and you will act accordingly.

Since my arrival here, I have found the German lady, of whom you have heard me speak. Her first child died in the month; but she has another, about the age of my ———, a fine little creature. They are still but con-

G 3

triving

triving to live—earning their daily bread—yet, though they are but just above poverty, I envy them.—She is a tender, affectionate mother—fatigued even by her attention.—However she has an affectionate husband in her turn, to render her care light, and to share her pleasure.

I will own to you that, feeling extreme tenderness for my little girl, I grow sad very often when I am playing with her; that you are not here, to observe with me how her mind unfolds, and her little heart becomes attached!—These appear to me to be true pleasures—and still you suffer them to escape you, in search of what we may never enjoy.—It is your own maxim to “live in the present moment.”—*If you do*—stay, for God’s sake; but tell me the truth—if not, tell me when I may expect

expect to see you, and let me not be always vainly looking for you, till I grow sick at heart.

Adieu! I am a little hurt.—I must take my darling to my bosom to comfort me.

* * * *

LETTER XXXI.

December 30.

SHOULD you receive three or four of the letters at once which I have written lately, do not think of Sir John Brute, for I do not mean to wife you. I only take advantage of every occasion, that one out of three of my epistles may reach your hands, and in-

G 4

form

form you that I am not of ———'s opinion, who talks till he makes me angry, of the necessity of your staying two or three months longer. I do not like this life of continual inquietude—and, *entre nous*, I am determined to try to earn some money here myself, in order to convince you that, if you chuse to run about the world to get a fortune, it is for yourself—for the little girl and I will live without your assistance, unless you are with us. I may be termed proud—Be it so—but I will never abandon certain principles of action.

The common run of men have such an ignoble way of thinking, that, if they debauch their hearts, and prostitute their persons, following perhaps a gust of inebriation, they suppose the wife, slave rather, whom they maintain,

tain, has no right to complain, and ought to receive the sultan, whenever he deigns to return, with open arms, though his have been polluted by half an hundred promiscuous amours during his absence.

I consider fidelity and constancy as two distinct things; yet the former is necessary, to give life to the other—and such a degree of respect do I think due to myself, that, if only probity, which is a good thing in its place, brings you back, never return!—for, if a wandering of the heart, or even a caprice of the imagination detains you—there is an end of all my hopes of happiness—I could not forgive it, if I would.

I have gotten into a melancholy mood, you perceive. You know my opinion of men in general; you know that

that I think them systematic tyrants, and that it is the rarest thing in the world, to meet with a man with sufficient delicacy of feeling to govern desire. When I am thus sad, I lament that my little darling, fondly as I doat on her, is a girl.—I am sorry to have a tie to a world that for me is ever sown with thorns.

You will call this an ill-humoured letter, when, in fact, it is the strongest proof of affection I can give, to dread to lose you. ——— has taken such pains to convince me that you must and ought to stay, that it has inconceivably depressed my spirits—You have always known my opinion—I have ever declared, that two people, who mean to live together, ought not to be long separated.—If certain things are more necessary to you than me—search
for

for them—Say but one word, and you shall never hear of me more.—If not—for God's sake, let us struggle with poverty—with any evil, but these continual inquietudes of business, which I have been told were to last but a few months, though every day the end appears more distant! This is the first letter in this strain that I have determined to forward to you; the rest lie by, because I was unwilling to give you pain, and I should not now write, if I did not think that there would be no conclusion to the schemes, which demand, as I am told, your presence.

* * * * †

† The person to whom the letters are addressed, was about this time at Ramsgate, on his return, as he professed, to Paris, when he was recalled, as it should seem, to London, by the further pressure of business now accumulated upon him.

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.

January 9.

I JUST now received one of your hasty *notes*; for business so entirely occupies you, that you have not time, or sufficient command of thought, to write letters. Beware! you seem to be got into a whirl of projects and schemes, which are drawing you into a gulph, that, if it do not absorb your happiness, will infallibly destroy mine.

Fatigued during my youth by the most arduous struggles, not only to obtain independence, but to render myself useful, not merely pleasure, for which I had the most lively taste, I

mean the simple pleasures that flow from passion and affection, escaped me, but the most melancholy views of life were impressed by a disappointed heart on my mind. Since I knew you, I have been endeavouring to go back to my former nature, and have allowed some time to glide away, winged with the delight which only spontaneous enjoyment can give.—Why have you so soon dissolved the charm?

I am really unable to bear the continual inquietude which your and ———'s never-ending plans produce. This you may term want of firmness—but you are mistaken—I have still sufficient firmness to pursue my principle of action. The present misery, I cannot find a softer word to do justice to my feelings, appears to me unnecessary

fary

fary—and therefore I have not firmness to support it as you may think I ought. I should have been content, and still wish, to retire with you to a farm—My God! any thing, but these continual anxieties—any thing but commerce, which debases the mind, and roots out affection from the heart.

I do not mean to complain of subordinate inconveniences——yet I will simply observe, that, led to expect you every week, I did not make the arrangements required by the present circumstances, to procure the necessities of life. In order to have them, a servant, for that purpose only, is indispensable—The want of wood, has made me catch the most violent cold I ever had; and my head is so disturbed by continual coughing, that I am unable

I

to

to write without stopping frequently to recollect myself.—This however is one of the common evils which must be borne with——bodily pain does not touch the heart, though it fatigues the spirits.

Still as you talk of your return, even in February, doubtingly, I have determined, the moment the weather changes, to wean my child.—It is too soon for her to begin to divide sorrow!—And as one has well said, “despair is a freeman,” we will go and seek our fortune together.

This is not a caprice of the moment—for your absence has given new weight to some conclusions, that I was very reluctantly forming before you left me.—I do not chuse to be a secondary object.—If your feelings were in unison with mine, you would not sacrifice

sacrifice so much to visionary prospects of future advantage.

* * * *

L E T T E R XXXIII.

Jan. 15.

I WAS just going to begin my letter with the tag end of a song, which would only have told you, what I may as well say simply, that it is pleasant to forgive those we love. I have received your two letters, dated the 26th and 28th of December, and my anger died away. You can scarcely conceive the effect some of your letters have produced on me. After longing to hear from you during a tedious interval of suspense, I have seen a superscription written by
you—

you.—Promising myself pleasure, and feeling emotion, I have laid it by me, till the person who brought it, left the room—when, behold! on opening it, I have found only half a dozen hasty lines, that have damped all the rising affection of my soul.

Well, now for business—

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

My animal is well; I have not yet taught her to eat, but nature is doing the business. I gave her a crust to assist the cutting of her teeth; and now she has two, she makes good use of them to gnaw a crust, biscuit, &c. You would laugh to see her; she is just like a little squirrel; she will guard a crust for two hours; and, after fixing her eye on an object for some time, dart

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H

on

on it with an aim as sure as a bird of prey—nothing can equal her life and spirits. I suffer from a cold; but it does not affect her. Adieu! do not forget to love us—and come soon to tell us that you do.

* * * *

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Jan. 30.

FROM the purport of your last letters, I should suppose that this will scarcely reach you; and I have already written so many letters, that you have either not received, or neglected to acknowledge, I do not find it pleasant, or rather I have no inclination, to go over the same ground again.

again. If you have received them, and are still detained by new projects, it is useless for me to say any more on the subject. I have done with it for ever; yet I ought to remind you that your pecuniary interest suffers by your absence.

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

For my part, my head is turned giddy, by only hearing of plans to make money, and my contemptuous feelings have sometimes burst out. I therefore was glad that a violent cold gave me a pretext to stay at home, lest I should have uttered unseasonable truths.

My child is well, and the spring will perhaps restore me to myself.—
 I have endured many inconveniences

H 2

this

this winter, which should I be ashamed to mention, if they had been unavoidable. "The secondary pleasures of life," you say, "are very necessary to my comfort:" it may be so; but I have ever considered them as secondary. If therefore you accuse me of wanting the resolution necessary to bear the *common** evils of life; I should answer, that I have not fashioned my mind to sustain them, because I would avoid them, cost what it would——

Adieu!

* * * *

* This probably alludes to some expression of the person to whom the letters are addressed, in which he treated as common evils, things upon which the letter-writer was disposed to bestow a different appellation.

EDITOR.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.

February 9.

THE melancholy presentiment has for some time hung on my spirits, that we were parted for ever; and the letters I received this day, by Mr. —, convince me that it was not without foundation. You allude to some other letters, which I suppose have miscarried; for most of those I have got, were only a few hasty lines, calculated to wound the tenderness the sight of the superscriptions excited.

I mean not however to complain; yet so many feelings are struggling for utterance, and agitating a heart almost bursting with anguish, that I find it

H 3

very

very difficult to write with any degree of coherence.

You left me indisposed, though you have taken no notice of it; and the most fatiguing journey I ever had, contributed to continue it. However, I recovered my health; but a neglected cold, and continual inquietude during the last two months, have reduced me to a state of weakness I never before experienced. Those who did not know that the canker-worm was at work at the core, cautioned me about suckling my child too long.—God preserve this poor child, and render her happier than her mother!

But I am wandering from my subject: indeed my head turns giddy, when I think that all the confidence I have had in the affection of others is come to this.—I did not expect this blow from you.

I have

I have done my duty to you and my child; and if I am not to have any return of affection to reward me, I have the sad consolation of knowing that I deserved a better fate. My soul is weary—I am sick at heart; and, but for this little darling, I would cease to care about a life, which is now stripped of every charm.

You see how stupid I am, uttering declamation, when I meant simply to tell you, that I consider your requesting me to come to you, as merely dictated by honour.—Indeed, I scarcely understand you.—You request me to come, and then tell me, that you have not given up all thoughts of returning to this place.

When I determined to live with you, I was only governed by affection.—I would share poverty with you, but I

H 4

turn

turn with affright from the sea of trouble on which you are entering.—I have certain principles of action: I know what I look for to found my happiness on.—It is not money.—With you I wished for sufficient to procure the comforts of life—as it is, less will do.—I can still exert myself to obtain the necessaries of life for my child, and she does not want more at present.—I have two or three plans in my head to earn our subsistence; for do not suppose that, neglected by you, I will lie under obligations of a pecuniary kind to you!—No; I would sooner submit to menial service.—I wanted the support of your affection—that gone, all is over!—I did not think, when I complained of ——'s contemptible avidity to accumulate money, that he would

would have dragged you into his schemes.

I cannot write.—I inclose a fragment of a letter, written soon after your departure, and another which tenderness made me keep back when it was written.—You will see then the sentiments of a calmer, though not a more determined, moment.—Do not insult me by saying, that “our being together is paramount to every other consideration!” Were it, you would not be running after a bubble, at the expence of my peace of mind.

Perhaps this is the last letter you will ever receive from me.

* * * *

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Feb. 10.

YOU talk of "permanent views and future comfort"—not for me, for I am dead to hope. The inquietudes of the last winter have finished the business, and my heart is not only broken, but my constitution destroyed. I conceive myself in a galloping consumption, and the continual anxiety I feel at the thought of leaving my child, feeds the fever that nightly devours me. It is on her account that I again write to you, to conjure you, by all that you hold sacred, to leave her here with the German lady you may have heard me mention! She has a child of the same age, and they may be brought up together,

gether, as I wish her to be brought up. I shall write more fully on the subject. To facilitate this, I shall give up my present lodgings, and go into the same house. I can live much cheaper there, which is now become an object. I have had 3000 livres from —, and I shall take one more, to pay my servant's wages, &c. and then I shall endeavour to procure what I want by my own exertions. I shall entirely give up the acquaintance of the Americans.

— and I have not been on good terms a long time. Yesterday he very unmanlily exulted over me, on account of your determination to stay. I had provoked it, it is true, by some asperities against commerce, which have dropped from me, when we have argued about the propriety of your remaining where you are ; and it is no matter, I

have drunk too deep of the bitter cup to care about trifles.

When you first entered into these plans, you bounded your views to the gaining of a thousand pounds. It was sufficient to have procured a farm in America, which would have been an independence. You find now that you did not know yourself, and that a certain situation in life is more necessary to you than you imagined—more necessary than an uncorrupted heart—For a year or two, you may procure yourself what you call pleasure; eating, drinking, and women; but, in the solitude of declining life, I shall be remembered with regret—I was going to say with remorse, but checked my pen.

As I have never concealed the nature of my connection with you, your repu-

tation will not suffer. I shall never have a confident : I am content with the approbation of my own mind ; and, if there be a searcher of hearts, mine will not be despised. Reading what you have written relative to the desertion of women, I have often wondered how theory and practice could be so different, till I recollected, that the sentiments of passion, and the resolves of reason, are very distinct. As to my sisters, as you are so continually hurried with business, you need not write to them—I shall, when my mind is calmer. God blefs you ! Adieu !

* * * *

This has been such a period of barbarity and misery, I ought not to complain of having my share. I wish one moment that I had never heard of the cruelties

cruelties that have been practised here, and the next envy the mothers who have been killed with their children. Surely I had suffered enough in life, not to be cursed with a fondness, that burns up the vital stream I am imparting. You will think me mad: I would I were so, that I could forget my misery—so that my head or heart would be still.—

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Feb. 19,

WHEN I first received your letter, putting off your return to an indefinite time, I felt so hurt, that I know not what I wrote. I am now calmer, though it was not the kind of wound
over

over which time has the quickest effect; on the contrary, the more I think, the sadder I grow. Society fatigues me inexpressibly—So much so, that finding fault with every one, I have only reason enough, to discover that the fault is in myself. My child alone interests me, and, but for her, I should not take any pains to recover my health.

As it is, I shall wean her, and try if by that step (to which I feel a repugnance, for it is my only solace) I can get rid of my cough. Physicians talk much of the danger attending any complaint on the lungs, after a woman has suckled for some months. They lay a stress also on the necessity of keeping the mind tranquil—and, my God! how has mine been harrassed! But whilst the caprices of other women are gratified, “the wind of heaven not suffered
to

to visit them too rudely," I have not found a guardian angel, in heaven or on earth, to ward off sorrow or care from my bosom.

What sacrifices have you not made for a woman you did not respect!—But I will not go over this ground—I want to tell you that I do not understand you. You say that you have not given up all thoughts of returning here—and I know that it will be necessary—nay, is. I cannot explain myself; but if you have not lost your memory, you will easily divine my meaning. What! is our life then only to be made up of separations? and am I only to return to a country, that has not merely lost all charms for me, but for which I feel a repugnance that almost amounts to horror, only to be left there a prey to it!

Why

Why is it so necessary that I should return?—brought up here, my girl would be freer. Indeed, expecting you to join us, I had formed some plans of usefulness that have now vanished with my hopes of happiness.

In the bitterness of my heart, I could complain with reason, that I am left here dependent on a man, whose avidity to acquire a fortune has rendered him callous to every sentiment connected with social or affectionate emotions.—With a brutal insensibility, he cannot help displaying the pleasure your determination to stay gives him, in spite of the effect it is visible it has had on me.

Till I can earn money, I shall endeavour to borrow some, for I want to avoid asking him continually for the sum necessary to maintain me.—Do not

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I

mistake

mistake me, I have never been refused. — Yet I have gone half a dozen times to the house to ask for it, and come away without speaking—you must guess why—Besides, I wish to avoid hearing of the eternal projects to which you have sacrificed my peace—not remembering—but I will be silent for ever.——

LETTER XXXVIII.

April 7.

• HERE I am at H——, on the wing towards you, and I write now, only to tell you, that you may expect me in the course of three or four days; for
I shall

I shall not attempt to give vent to the different emotions which agitate my heart—You may term a feeling, which appears to me to be a degree of delicacy that naturally arises from sensibility, pride—Still I cannot indulge the very affectionate tenderness which glows in my bosom, without trembling, till I see, by your eyes, that it is mutual.

I sit, lost in thought, looking at the sea—and tears rush into my eyes, when I find that I am cherishing any fond expectations.—I have indeed been so unhappy this winter, I find it as difficult to acquire fresh hopes, as to regain tranquillity.—Enough of this—lie still, foolish heart!—But for the little girl, I could almost wish that it should cease to beat, to be no more alive to the anguish of disappointment.

I 2

Sweet

Sweet little creature! I deprived myself of my only pleasure, when I weaned her, about ten days ago.—I am however glad I conquered my repugnance.—It was necessary it should be done soon, and I did not wish to embitter the renewal of your acquaintance with her, by putting it off till we met.—It was a painful exertion to me, and I thought it best to throw this inquietude with the rest, into the sack that I would fain throw over my shoulder.—I wished to endure it alone, in short—Yet, after sending her to sleep in the next room for three or four nights, you cannot think with what joy I took her back again to sleep in my bosom!

I suppose I shall find you, when I arrive, for I do not see any necessity for your coming to me.—Pray inform Mr. ———, that I have his little friend
with

with me.—My wishing to oblige him, made me put myself to some inconvenience——and delay my departure; which was irksome to me, who have not quite as much philosophy, I would not for the world say indifference, as you. God blefs you!

Yours truly

* * * *

LETTER XXXIX.

Brighthelmstone, Saturday, April 11.

HERE we are, my love, and mean to set out early in the morning; and, if I can find you, I hope to dine with you to-morrow.—I shall drive to ——'s hotel, where —— tells me you have

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been—

been,—and, if you have left it, I hope you will take care to be there to receive us.

I have brought with me Mr. ——'s little friend, and a girl whom I like to take care of our little darling—not on the way, for that fell to my share.—But why do I write about trifles?—or any thing?—Are we not to meet soon?—What does your heart say!

Yours truly

* * * *

I have weaned my ——, and she is now eating away at the white bread.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

London, Friday, May 22.

I HAVE just received your affectionate letter, and am distressed to think that I have added to your embarrassments at this troublesome juncture, when the exertion of all the faculties of your mind appears to be necessary, to extricate you out of your pecuniary difficulties. I suppose it was something relative to the circumstance you have mentioned, which made —— request to see me to-day, to *converse about a matter of great importance*. Be that as it may, his letter (such is the state of my spirits) inconceivably alarmed me, and rendered

the last night as distressing, as the two former had been.

I have laboured to calm my mind since you left me—Still I find that tranquillity is not to be obtained by exertion ; it is a feeling so different from the resignation of despair!—I am however no longer angry with you—nor will I ever utter another complaint—there are arguments which convince the reason, whilst they carry death to the heart.—We have had too many cruel explanations, that not only cloud every future prospect ; but embitter the remembrances which alone give life to affection.—Let the subject never be revived !

It seems to me that I have not only lost the hope, but the power of being happy.—Every emotion is now sharpened

ened by anguish.—My soul has been shook, and my tone of feelings destroyed.—I have gone out—and sought for dissipation, if not amusement, merely to fatigue still more, I find, my irritable nerves——

My friend—my dear friend—examine yourself well—I am out of the question; for, alas! I am nothing—and discover what you wish to do—what will render you most comfortable—or, to be more explicit—whether you desire to live with me, or part for ever? When you can once ascertain it, tell me frankly, I conjure you!—for, believe me, I have very involuntarily interrupted your peace.

I shall expect you to dinner on Monday, and will endeavour to assume a cheerful face to greet you—at any
rate

rate I will avoid conversations, which only tend to harrafs your feelings, because I am most affectionately yours,

* * * *

L E T T E R XLI.

Wednesday.

I INCLOSE you the letter, which you desired me to forward, and I am tempted very laconically to wish you a good morning—not because I am angry, or have nothing to say; but to keep down a wounded spirit.—I shall make every effort to calm my mind—yet a strong conviction seems to whirl round in the very centre of my brain, which, like
the

the fiat of fate, emphatically assures me, that grief has a firm hold of my heart.

God blefs you !

Yours sincerely

* * * *

LETTER XLII.

—, Wednesday, Two o'Clock.

WE arrived here about an hour ago. I am extremely fatigued with the child, who would not rest quiet with any body but me, during the night—and now we are here in a comfortless, damp room, in a sort of a tomb-like house. This however I shall quickly remedy,

remedy, for, when I have finished this letter, (which I must do immediately, because the post goes out early), I shall sail forth, and enquire about a vessel and an inn.

I will not distress you by talking of the depression of my spirits, or the struggle I had to keep alive my dying heart.—It is even now too full to allow me to write with composure.—*****, —dear *****, —am I always to be tossed about thus?—shall I never find an asylum to rest *contented* in? How can you love to fly about continually—dropping down, as it were, in a new world—cold and strange!—every other day? Why do you not attach those tender emotions round the idea of home, which even now dim my eyes?—This alone is affection—every thing else is only humanity, electrified by sympathy.

I will

I will write to you again to-morrow, when I know how long I am to be detained—and hope to get a letter quickly from you, to cheer yours sincerely and affectionately

* * * *

—— is playing near me in high spirits. She was so pleased with the noise of the mail-horn, she has been continually imitating it.—Adieu!

LETTER XLIII.

Thursday.

A LADY has just sent to offer to take me to ——. I have then only a moment to exclaim against the vague
3 manner

manner in which people give informa-
tion — — — — —

— — — — — —

— — — — — —

— — — — — —

— — — — — —

But why talk of inconveniences, which
are in fact trifling, when compared
with the sinking of the heart I have
felt! I did not intend to touch this
painful string—God bless you!

Yours truly,

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

Friday, June 12.

I HAVE just received yours dated the 9th, which I suppose was a mistake, for it could scarcely have loitered so long on the road. The general observations which apply to the state of your own mind, appear to me just, as far as they go; and I shall always consider it as one of the most serious misfortunes of my life, that I did not meet you, before satiety had rendered your senses so fastidious, as almost to close up every tender avenue of sentiment and affection that leads to your sympathetic heart. You have a heart, my friend, yet, hurried away by the impetuosity of inferior feelings, you have sought in vulgar excesses,

excesses, for that gratification which only the heart can bestow.

The common run of men, I know, with strong health and gross appetites, must have variety to banish *ennui*, because the imagination never lends its magic wand, to convert appetite into love, cemented by according reason.— Ah! my friend, you know not the ineffable delight, the exquisite pleasure, which arises from a union of affection and desire, when the whole soul and senses are abandoned to a lively imagination, that renders every emotion delicate and rapturous. Yes; these are emotions, over which satiety has no power, and the recollection of which, even disappointment cannot disenchant; but they do not exist without self-denial. These emotions, more or less strong, appear to me to be the distinctive

tive characteristic of genius, the foundation of taste, and of that exquisite relish for the beauties of nature, of which the common herd of eaters and drinkers and *child-begeters*, certainly have no idea. You will smile at an observation that has just occurred to me:—I consider those minds as the most strong and original, whose imagination acts as the stimulus to their senses.

Well! you will ask, what is the result of all this reasoning? Why I cannot help thinking that it is possible for you, having great strength of mind, to return to nature, and regain a sanity of constitution, and purity of feeling—which would open your heart to me.—I would fain rest there!

Yet, convinced more than ever of the sincerity and tenderness of my attachment to you, the involuntary hopes,

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K

which

which a determination to live has revived, are not sufficiently strong to dissipate the cloud, that despair has spread over futurity. I have looked at the sea, and at my child, hardly daring to own to myself the secret wish, that it might become our tomb; and that the heart, still so alive to anguish, might there be quieted by death. At this moment ten thousand complicated sentiments press for utterance, weigh on my heart, and obscure my sight.

Are we ever to meet again? and will you endeavour to render that meeting happier than the last? Will you endeavour to restrain your caprices, in order to give vigour to affection, and to give play to the checked sentiments that nature intended should expand your heart? I cannot indeed, without agony, think of your bosom's being continually

rually contaminated; and bitter are the tears which exhaust my eyes, when I recollect why my child and I are forced to stray from the asylum, in which, after so many storms, I had hoped to rest, smiling at angry fate. —These are not common sorrows; nor can you perhaps conceive, how much active fortitude it requires to labour perpetually to blunt the shafts of disappointment.

Examine now yourself, and ascertain whether you can live in something like a settled stile. Let our confidence in future be unbounded; consider whether you find it necessary to sacrifice me to what you term “the zest of life;” and, when you have once a clear view of your own motives, of your own incentive to action, do not deceive me!

The train of thoughts which the

K 2

writing

writing of this epistle awoke, makes me so wretched, that I must take a walk, to rouse and calm my mind. But first, let me tell you, that, if you really wish to promote my happiness, you will endeavour to give me as much as you can of yourself. You have great mental energy; and your judgment seems to me so just, that it is only the dupe of your inclination in discussing one subject.

The post does not go out to-day. To-morrow I may write more tranquilly. I cannot yet say when the vessel will sail in which I have determined to depart.

Saturday Morning.

Your second letter reached me about an hour ago. You were certainly wrong

wrong, in supposing that I did not mention you with respect; though, without my being conscious of it, some sparks of resentment may have animated the gloom of despair—Yes; with less affection, I should have been more respectful. However the regard which I have for you, is so unequivocal to myself, I imagine that it must be sufficiently obvious to every body else. Besides, the only letter I intended for the public eye was to —, and that I destroyed from delicacy before you saw them, because it was only written (of course warmly in your praise) to prevent any odium being thrown on you*.

I am harrassed by your embarrassments, and shall certainly use all my

* This passage refers to letters written under a purpose of suicide, and not intended to be opened till after the catastrophe.

K 3

efforts,

efforts, to make the business terminate to your satisfaction in which I am engaged.

My friend—my dearest friend—I feel my fate united to yours by the most sacred principles of my soul, and the yearns of—yes, I will say it—a true, unsophisticated heart.

Yours most truly

* * * *

If the wind be fair, the captain talks of sailing on Monday; but I am afraid I shall be detained some days longer. At any rate, continue to write, (I want this support) till you are sure I am where I cannot expect a letter; and, if any should arrive after my departure, a gentleman (not Mr. —'s friend, I promise you) from whom I have

have received great civilities, will send them after me.

Do write by every occasion ! I am anxious to hear how your affairs go on ; and, still more, to be convinced that you are not separating yourself from us. For my little darling is calling papa, and adding her parrot word—Come, Come ! And will you not come, and let us exert ourselves ?—I shall recover all my energy, when I am convinced that my exertions will draw us more closely together. One more adieu !

LETTER XLV.

Sunday, June 14.

FATHER expected to hear from you to-day—I wish you would not fail to write to me for a little time, because I am not quite well—Whether I have any good sleep or not, I wake in the morning in violent fits of trembling—and, in spite of all my efforts, the child—every thing—fatigues me, in which I seek for solace or amusement.

Mr. ——— forced on me a letter to a physician of this place; it was fortunate, for I should otherwise have had some difficulty to obtain the necessary information. His wife is a pretty woman (I can admire, you know, a pretty woman,

man, when I am alone) and he an intelligent and rather interesting man.— They have behaved to me with great hospitality; and poor ——— was never so happy in her life, as amongst their young brood.

They took me in their carriage to ———, and I ran over my favourite walks, with a vivacity that would have astonished you.— The town did not please me quite so well as formerly.— It appeared so diminutive; and, when I found that many of the inhabitants had lived in the same houses ever since I left it, I could not help wondering how they could thus have vegetated, whilst I was running over a world of sorrow, snatching at pleasure, and throwing off prejudices. The place where I at present am, is much improved; but it is astonishing what strides

strides aristocracy and fanaticism have made, since I resided in this country.

The wind does not appear inclined to change, so I am still forced to linger—When do you think that you shall be able to set out for France? I do not entirely like the aspect of your affairs, and still less your connections on either side of the water. Often do I sigh, when I think of your entanglements in business, and your extreme restlessness of mind.—Even now I am almost afraid to ask you, whether the pleasure of being free, does not overbalance the pain you felt at parting with me? Sometimes I indulge the hope that you will feel me necessary to you—or why should we meet again?—but, the moment after, despair damps my rising spirits, aggravated by the emotions

emotions of tenderness, which ought to soften the cares of life.—God bless you!

Yours sincerely and affectionately

* * *

LETTER XLVI.

June 15.

I WANT to know how you have settled with respect to——. In short, be very particular in your account of all your affairs—let our confidence, my dear, be unbounded.—The last time we were separated, was a separation indeed on your part—Now you have acted more ingenuously, let

let the most affectionate interchange of sentiments fill up the aching void of disappointment. I almost dread that your plans will prove abortive—yet should the most unlucky turn send you home to us, convinced that a true friend is a treasure, I should not much mind having to struggle with the world again. Accuse me not of pride—yet sometimes, when nature has opened my heart to its author, I have wondered that you did not set a higher value on my heart.

Receive a kiss from ———, I was going to add, if you will not take one from me, and believe me yours

Sincerely

* * * *

The wind still continues in the same quarter.

LETTER

LETTER XLVII.

Tuesday Morning.

THE captain has just sent to inform me, that I must be on board in the course of a few hours.—I wished to have stayed till to-morrow. It would have been a comfort to me to have received another letter from you.—Should one arrive, it will be sent after me.

My spirits are agitated, I scarcely know why.—The quitting England seems to be a fresh parting.—Surely you will not forget me.—A thousand weak forebodings assault my soul, and the state of my health renders me sensible to every thing. It is surprising that in London, in a continual conflict

fluct of mind, I was still growing better—whilst here, bowed down by the despotic hand of fate, forced into resignation by despair, I seem to be fading away—perishing beneath a cruel blight, that withers up all my faculties.

The child is perfectly well. My hand seems unwilling to add adieu! I know not why this inexpressible sadness has taken possession of me.—It is not a presentiment of ill. Yet, having been so perpetually the sport of disappointment,—having a heart that has been as it were a mark for misery, I dread to meet wretchedness in some new shape.—Well, let it come—I care not!—what have I to dread, who have so little to hope for! God bless you—I am most affectionately and sincerely yours

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

Wednesday Morning.

I WAS hurried on board yesterday about three o'clock, the wind having changed. But before evening it veered round to the old point; and here we are, in the midst of mists and water, only taking advantage of the tide to advance a few miles.

You will scarcely suppose that I left the town with reluctance—yet it was even so—for I wished to receive another letter from you, and I felt pain at parting, for ever perhaps, from the amiable family, who had treated me with so much hospitality and kindness. They will probably send me your letter, if it arrives

arrives this morning; for here we are likely to remain, I am afraid to think how long.

The vessel is very commodious, and the captain a civil, open-hearted kind of man. There being no other passengers, I have the cabin to myself, which is pleasant; and I have brought a few books with me to beguile weariness; but I seem inclined, rather to employ the dead moments of suspense in writing some effusions, than in reading.

What are you about? How are your affairs going on? It may be a long time before you answer these questions. My dear friend, my heart sinks within me!—Why am I forced thus to struggle continually with my affections and feelings?—Ah! why are those affections and feelings the source

of

of so much misery, when they seem to have been given to vivify my heart, and extend my usefulness! But I must not dwell on this subject.—Will you not endeavour to cherish all the affection you can for me? What am I saying?—Rather forget me, if you can—if other gratifications are dearer to you.—How is every remembrance of mine embittered by disappointment? What a world is this!—They only seem happy, who never look beyond sensual or artificial enjoyments.—Adieu!

—— begins to play with the cabin-boy, and is as gay as a lark.—I will labour to be tranquil; and am in every mood,

Yours sincerely

* * * *

L E T T E R XLIX.

Thursday.

HERE I am still—and I have just received your letter of Monday by the pilot, who promised to bring it to me, if we were detained, as he expected, by the wind.—It is indeed wearisome to be thus tossed about without going forward.—I have a violent headache—yet I am obliged to take care of the child, who is a little tormented by her teeth, because ——— is unable to do any thing, she is rendered so sick by the motion of the ship, as we ride at anchor.

These are however trifling inconveniences, compared with anguish of mind—compared with the sinking of a
broken

broken heart.—To tell you the truth, I never suffered in my life so much from depression of spirits—from despair.—I do not sleep—or, if I close my eyes, it is to have the most terrifying dreams, in which I often meet you with different casts of countenances.

I will not, my dear ———, torment you by dwelling on my sufferings—and will use all my efforts to calm my mind, instead of deadening it—at present it is most painfully active. I find I am not equal to these continual struggles—yet your letter this morning has afforded me some comfort—and I will try to revive hope. One thing let me tell you—when we meet again—surely we are to meet!—it must be to part no more. I mean not to have seas between us—it is more than I can support.

L. 2.

Ther

The pilot is hurrying me—God bless you.

In spite of the commodiousness of the vessel, every thing here would disgust my senses, had I nothing else to think of—"When the mind's free, the body's delicate;"—mine has been too much hurt to regard trifles.

Yours most truly

* * * *

LETTER L.

Saturday.

THIS is the fifth dreary day I have been imprisoned by the wind, with every outward object to disgust the senses, and unable to banish the remembrances that sadden my heart.

How

How am I altered by disappointment!—When going to —, ten years ago, the elasticity of my mind was sufficient to ward off weariness—and the imagination still could dip her brush in the rainbow of fancy, and sketch futurity in smiling colours. Now I am going towards the North in search of sunbeams!—Will any ever warm this desolated heart? All nature seems to frown—or rather mourn with me.—Every thing is cold—cold as my expectations! Before I left the shore, tormented, as I now am, by these North-east *chillers*, I could not help exclaiming—Give me, gracious Heaven! at least, genial weather, if I am never to meet the genial affection that still warms this agitated bosom—compelling life to linger there.

I am now going on shore with the
 L 3 captain,

AD FINE

captain, though the weather be rough, to seek for milk, &c. at a little village, and to take a walk—after which I hope to sleep—for, confined here, surrounded by disagreeable smells, I have lost the little appetite I had; and I lie awake, till thinking almost drives me to the brink of madness—only to the brink, for I never forget, even in the feverish humbers I sometimes fall into, the misery I am labouring to blunt the sense of, by every exertion in my power.

Poor ——— still continues sick, and ——— grows weary when the weather will not allow her to remain on deck.

I hope this will be the last letter I shall write from England to you—are you not tired of this lingering adieu?

Yours truly

LETTER

LETTER LI.

Sunday Morning.

THE captain last night, after I had written my letter to you intended to be left at a little village, offered to go to ——— to pass to-day. We had a troublesome sail—and now I must hurry on board again, for the wind has changed.

I half expected to find a letter from you here. Had you written one haphazard, it would have been kind and considerate—you might have known, had you thought, that the wind would not permit me to depart. These are attentions, more grateful to the heart

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than

than offers of service—But why do I foolishly continue to look for them?

Adieu! adieu! My friend—your friendship is very cold—you see I am hurt.—God bless you! I may perhaps be, some time or other, independent in every sense of the word—Ah! there is but one sense of it of consequence. I will break or bend this weak heart—yet even now it is full.

Yours sincerely

* * * *

The child is well; I did not leave her on board.

LETTER

LETTER LM.

June 27, Saturday.

I ARRIVED in ——— this afternoon, after vainly attempting to land at ———. I have now but a moment, before the post goes out, to inform you we have got here; though not without considerable difficulty, for we were set ashore in a boat above twenty miles below.

What I suffered in the vessel I will not now descant upon—nor mention the pleasure I received from the sight of the rocky coast.—This morning however, walking to join the carriage that was to transport us to this place,
I fell

and fatigued with the endeavours to amuse me, from which I cannot escape.

My friend—my friend, I am not well—a deadly weight of sorrow lies heavily on my heart. I am again tossed on the troubled billows of life; and obliged to cope with difficulties, without being buoyed up by the hopes that alone render them bearable. “How flat, dull, and unprofitable,” appears to me all the bustle into which I see people here so eagerly enter! I long every night to go to bed, to hide my melancholy face in my pillow; but there is a canker-worm in my bosom that never sleeps.

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER LIV.

July 1.

I LABOUR in vain to calm my mind—my soul has been overwhelmed by sorrow and disappointment. Every thing fatigues me—this is a life that cannot last long. It is you who must determine with respect to futurity—and, when you have, I will act accordingly—I mean, we must either resolve to live together, or part for ever, I cannot bear these continual struggles—But I wish you to examine carefully your own heart and mind; and, if you perceive the least chance of being happier without me than with me, or if your inclination

nation leans capriciously to that side, do not dissemble; but tell me frankly that you will never see me more. I will then adopt the plan I mentioned to you—for we must either live together, or I will be entirely independent.

My heart is so oppressed, I cannot write with precision—You know however that what I so imperfectly express, are not the crude sentiments of the moment—You can only contribute to my comfort (it is the consolation I am in need of) by being with me—and, if the tenderest friendship is of any value, why will you not look to me for a degree of satisfaction that heartless affections cannot bestow?

Tell me then, will you determine to meet me, at Balle?—I shall, I should imagine, be at — before the close of August; and, after you settle your affairs

affairs at Paris, could we not meet there?

God bless you!

Yours truly

* * * *

Poor _____ has suffered during the journey with her teeth.

L E T T E R, L V,

July 3.

THERE was a gloominess diffused through your last letter, the impression of which still rests on my mind—though, recollecting how quickly you throw off the forcible feelings of the moment, I flatter

flatter myself it has long since given place to your usual cheerfulness.

Believe me (and my eyes fill with tears of tenderness as I assure you) there is nothing I would not endure in the way of privation, rather than disturb your tranquillity.—If I am fated to be unhappy, I will labour to hide my sorrows in my own bosom; and you shall always find me a faithful, affectionate friend.

I grow more and more attached to my little girl—and I cherish this affection without fear, because it must be a long time before it can become bitterness of soul.—She is an interesting creature.—On ship-board, how often as I gazed at the sea, have I longed to bury my troubled bosom in the less troubled deep; asserting with Brutus, “that the virtue I had followed too far,

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far,

far, was merely an empty name!" and nothing but the sight of her—her playful smiles, which seemed to cling and twine round my heart—could have stopped me.

What peculiar misery has fallen to my share! To act up to my principles, I have laid the strictest restraint on my very thoughts—yes; not to fully the delicacy of my feelings, I have reined in my imagination; and started with affright from every sensation, (I allude to ——) that stealing with balmy sweetness into my soul, led me to scent from afar the fragrance of reviving nature.

My friend, I have dearly paid for one conviction.—Love, in some minds, is an affair of sentiment, arising from the same delicacy of perception (or taste) as renders them alive to the

VOL. III. M beauties

beauties of nature, poetry, &c, alive to the charms of those evanescent graces that are, as it were, impalpable—they must be felt; they cannot be described.

Love is a want of my heart. I have examined myself lately with more care than formerly, and find, that to deaden is not to calm the mind—Aiming at tranquillity, I have almost destroyed all the energy of my soul—almost rooted out what renders it estimable—Yes, I have damped that enthusiasm of character, which converts the grossest materials into a fuel, that imperceptibly feeds hopes, which aspire above common enjoyment. Despair, since the birth of my child, has rendered me stupid—soul and body seemed to be fading away before the withering touch of disappointment.

I am

I am now endeavouring to recover myself—and such is the elasticity of my constitution, and the purity of the atmosphere here, that health unsought for, begins to reanimate my countenance.

I have the sincerest esteem and affection for you—but the desire of regaining peace, (do you understand me?) has made me forget the respect due to my own emotions—sacred emotions, that are the sure harbingers of the delights I was formed to enjoy—and shall enjoy, for nothing can extinguish the heavenly spark.

Still, when we meet again, I will not torment you; I promise you. I blush when I recollect my former conduct—and will not in future confound myself with the beings whom I feel to

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be

be my inferiors.—I will listen to delicacy, or pride.

LETTER LVI.

July 4.

I HOPE to hear from you by to-morrow's mail. My dearest friend! I cannot tear my affections from you—and, though every remembrance stings me to the soul, I think of you, till I make allowance for the very defects of character, that have given such a cruel stab to my peace.

Still however I am more alive, than you have seen me for a long, long time.
I have

I have a degree of vivacity, even in my grief, which is preferable to the benumbing stupour that, for the last year, has frozen up all my faculties.—Perhaps this change is more owing to returning health, than to the vigour of my reason—for, in spite of sadness (and surely I have had my share), the purity of this air, and the being continually out in it, for I sleep in the country every night, has made an alteration in my appearance that really surprises me.—The rosy fingers of health already streak my cheeks—and I have seen a *physical* life in my eyes, after I have been climbing the rocks, that resembled the fond, credulous hopes of youth.

With what a cruel sigh have I recollected that I had forgotten to hope!—Reason, or rather experience, does not thus cruelly damp poor ———'s plea-

M 3.

tures ;

fures; she plays all day in the garden with ———'s children, and makes friends for herself.

Do not tell me, that you are happier without us—Will you not come to us in Switzerland? Ah, why do not you love us with more sentiment?—why are you a creature of such sympathy, that the warmth of your feelings, or rather quickness of your senses, hardens your heart? It is my misfortune, that my imagination is perpetually shading your defects, and lending you charms, whilst the grossness of your senses makes you (call me not vain) overlook graces in me, that only dignity of mind, and the sensibility of an expanded heart can give.—God bless you! Adieu,

LETTER

LETTER LVII.

July 7.

I COULD not help feeling extremely mortified last post, at not receiving a letter from you. My being at ——— was but a chance, and you might have hazarded it; and would a year ago.

I shall not however complain— There are misfortunes so great, as to silence the usual expressions of sorrow— Believe me, there is such a thing as a broken heart! There are characters whose very energy preys upon them; and who, ever inclined to cherish by reflection some passion, cannot rest satisfied with the common comforts of
M 4 life.

life. I have endeavoured to fly from myself, and launched into all the dissipation possible here, only to feel keener anguish, when alone with my child.

Still, could any thing please me—had not disappointment cut me off from life, this romantic country, these fine evenings, would interest me.—My God! can any thing? and am I ever to feel alive only to painful sensations?—But it cannot—it shall not last long.

The post is again arrived; I have sent to seek for letters, only to be wounded to the soul by a negative.—My brain seems on fire. I must go into the air.

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER LVIII.

July 14.

I AM now on my journey to ———. I felt more at leaving my child, than I thought I should—and, whilst at night I imagined every instant that I heard the half-formed sounds of her voice,—I asked myself how I could think of parting with her for ever, of leaving her thus helpless?

Poor lamb! It may run very well in a tale, that “God will temper the winds to the shorn lamb!” but how can I expect that she will be shielded, when my naked bosom has had to brave continually the pitiless storm?

Yes;



Yes; I could add, with poor Lear—
What is the war of elements to the
pangs of disappointed affection, and
the horror arising from a discovery of
a breach of confidence, that snaps every
social tie!

All is not right somewhere!—When
you first knew me, I was not thus lost.
I could still confide—for I opened my
heart to you—of this only comfort you
have deprived me, whilst my happi-
ness, you tell me, was your first object.
Strange want of judgment!

I will not complain; but, from the
soundness of your understanding, I am
convinced, if you give yourself leave to
reflect, you will also feel, that your
conduct to me, so far from being gene-
rous, has not been just.—I mean not
to allude to factitious principles of
morality; but to the simple basis of all
rectitude.

reſtitute.—However I did not intend to argue—Your not writing is cruel—and my reaſon is perhaps diſturbed by conſtant wretchedneſs.

Poor ——— would ſain have accompanied me, out of tenderneſs; for my fainting, or rather convulſion, when I landed, and my ſudden changes of countenance ſince, have alarmed her ſo much, that ſhe is perpetually afraid of ſome accident—But it would have injured the child this warm ſeaſon, as ſhe is cutting her teeth.

I hear not of your having written to me at ———. Very well! Act as you pleaſe—there is nothing I fear or care for! When I ſee whether I can, or cannot obtain the money I am come here about, I will not trouble you with letters to which you do not reply.

LETTER

LETTER LIX.

July 18.

I AM here in ———, separated
 from my child—and here I must remain
 a month at least, or I might as well
 never have come. — — —

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

I have begun ——— which will,
 I hope, discharge all my obligations
 of a pecuniary kind.—I am lowered in
 my own eyes, on account of my not
 having done it sooner.

I shall make no further comments on
 your silence. God bless you!

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER LX.

July 30.

I HAVE just received two of your letters, dated the 26th and 30th of June; and you must have received several from me, informing you of my detention, and how much I was hurt by your silence.

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

Write to me then, my friend, and write explicitly. I have suffered, God knows, since I left you. Ah! you have never felt this kind of sickness of heart! —My mind however is at present painfully active, and the sympathy I feel

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feel almost rises to agony. But this is not a subject of complaint, it has afforded me pleasure,—and reflected pleasure is all I have to hope for—if a spark of hope be yet alive in my forlorn bosom.

I will try to write with a degree of composure. I wish for us to live together, because I want you to acquire an habitual tenderness for my poor girl. I cannot bear to think of leaving her alone in the world, or that she should only be protected by your sense of duty. Next to preserving her, my most earnest wish is not to disturb your peace. I have nothing to expect, and little to fear, in life—There are wounds that can never be healed—but they may be allowed to fester in silence without wincing.

When we meet again, you shall be
convinced

convinced that I have more resolution than you give me credit for. I will not torment you. If I am destined always to be disappointed and unhappy, I will conceal the anguish I cannot dissipate; and the tightened cord of life or reason will at last snap, and set me free.

Yes; I shall be happy—This heart is worthy of the bliss its feelings anticipate—and I cannot even persuade myself, wretched as they have made me, that my principles and sentiments are not founded in nature and truth. But to have done with these subjects.

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

I have been seriously employed in this way since I came to —; yet I never was so much in the air.—I walk, I ride on horseback—row, bathe, and even
 I sleep

sleep in the fields; my health is consequently improved. The child, ——— informs me, is well. I long to be with her.

Write to me immediately—were I only to think of myself, I could wish you to return to me, poor, with the simplicity of character, part of which you seem lately to have lost, that first attached to you.

Yours most affectionately

* * * * *

I have been subscribing other letters—so I mechanically did the same to yours.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

August 5.

EMPLOYMENT and exercise have been of great service to me ; and I have entirely recovered the strength and activity I lost during the time of my nursing. I have seldom been in better health ; and my mind, though trembling to the touch of anguish, is calmer—yet still the same.—I have, it is true, enjoyed some tranquillity, and more happiness here, than for a long—long time past.—(I say happiness, for I can give no other appellation to the exquisite delight this wild country and fine summer have afforded me.)—Still, on examining my heart, I find that it is so

VOL. III. N constituted,

constituted, I cannot live without some particular affection—I am afraid not without a passion—and I feel the want of it more in society, than in solitude—

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

Writing to you, whenever an affectionate epithet occurs—my eyes fill with tears, and my trembling hand stops—you may then depend on my resolution, when with you. If I am doomed to be unhappy, I will confine my anguish in my own bosom—tenderness, rather than passion, has made me sometimes overlook delicacy—the same tenderness will in future restrain me. God bless you!

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

August 7.

AIR, exercise, and bathing, have restored me to health, braced my muscles, and covered my ribs, even whilst I have recovered my former activity.— I cannot tell you that my mind is calm, though I have snatched some moments of exquisite delight, wandering through the woods, and resting on the rocks.

This state of suspense, my friend, is intolerable; we must determine on something—and soon;—we must meet shortly, or part for ever. I am sensible that I acted foolishly—but I was wretched—when we were together—Expecting too much, I let the pleasure

N 2

I might

I might have caught, slip from me. I cannot live with you—I ought not—if you form another attachment. But I promise you, mine shall not be intruded on you. Little reason have I to expect a shadow of happiness, after the cruel disappointments that have rent my heart; but that of my child seems to depend on our being together. Still I do not wish you to sacrifice a chance of enjoyment for an uncertain good. I feel a conviction, that I can provide for her, and it shall be my object—if we are indeed to part to meet no more. Her affection must not be divided. She must be a comfort to me—if I am to have no other—and only know me as her support. I feel that I cannot endure the anguish of corresponding with you—if we are only to correspond.—No; if you seek for happiness

ness elsewhere, my letters shall not interrupt your repose. I will be dead to you. I cannot express to you what pain it gives me to write about an eternal separation.—You must determine—examine yourself—But, for God's sake! spare me the anxiety of uncertainty!—I may sink under the trial; but I will not complain.

Adieu! If I had any thing more to say to you, it is all flown, and absorbed by the most tormenting apprehensions; yet I scarcely know what new form of misery I have to dread.

I ought to beg your pardon for having sometimes written peevishly; but you will impute it to affection, if you understand any thing of the heart of

Yours truly

* * * *

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LETTER

LETTER LXIII.

August 9.

FIVE of your letters have been sent after me from —. One, dated the 14th of July, was written in a style which I may have merited, but did not expect from you. However this is not a time to reply to it, except to assure you that you shall not be tormented with any more complaints. I am disgusted with myself for having so long importuned you with my affection.—

My child is very well. We shall soon meet, to part no more, I hope—I mean, I and my girl.—I shall wait with some
degree

degree of anxiety till I am informed
how your affairs terminate.

Yours sincerely

* * * *

LETTER LXIV.

August 26.

I ARRIVED here last night, and with the most exquisite delight, once more pressed my babe to my heart. We shall part no more. You perhaps cannot conceive the pleasure it gave me, to see her run about, and play alone. Her increasing intelligence attaches me more and more to her. I have promised her that I will fulfil my duty to her ; and nothing

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in

in future shall make me forget it. I will also exert myself to obtain an independence for her; but I will not be too anxious on this head.

I have already told you, that I have recovered my health. Vigour, and even vivacity of mind, have returned with a renovated constitution. As for peace, we will not talk of it. I was not made, perhaps, to enjoy the calm contentment so termed.—

— — — — —
 — — — — —
 — — — — —

You tell me that my letters torture you; I will not describe the effect yours have on me. I received three this morning, the last dated the 7th of this month. I mean not to give vent to the emotions they produced.—

Certainly

Certainly you are right ; our minds are not congenial. I have lived in an ideal world, and fostered sentiments that you do not comprehend—or you would not treat me thus. I am not, I will not be, merely an object of compassion—a clog, however light, to teize you. Forget that I exist : I will never remind you. Something emphatical whispers me to put an end to these struggles. Be free—I will not torment, when I cannot please. I can take care of my child ; you need not continually tell me that our fortune is inseparable, *that you will try to cherish tenderness* for me. Do no violence to yourself ! When we are separated, our interest, since you give so much weight to pecuniary considerations, will be entirely divided. I want not protection without affection ; and support I need not, whilst my faculties
are

are undisturbed. I had a dislike to living in England; but painful feelings must give way to superior considerations. I may not be able to acquire the sum necessary to maintain my child and self elsewhere. It is too late to go to Switzerland. I shall not remain at —, living expensively. But be not alarmed! I shall not force myself on you any more.

Adieu! I am agitated—my whole frame is convulsed—my lips tremble, as if shook by cold, though fire seems to be circulating in my veins.

God bless you.

* * * *

LETTER

LETTER LXV.

September 6.

I RECEIVED just now your letter of the 20th. I had written you a letter last night, into which imperceptibly slipped some of my bitterness of soul. I will copy the part relative to business. I am not sufficiently vain to imagine that I can, for more than a moment, cloud your enjoyment of life—to prevent even that, you had better never hear from me—and repose on the idea that I am happy.

Gracious God! It is impossible for me to stifle something like resentment, when I receive fresh proofs of your indifference.

• difference. What I have suffered this last year, is not to be forgotten! I have not that happy substitute for wisdom, insensibility—and the lively sympathies which bind me to my fellow-creatures, are all of a painful kind.—They are the agonies of a broken heart—pleasure and I have shaken hands.

I see here nothing but heaps of ruins, and only converse with people immersed in trade and sensuality.

I am weary of travelling—yet seem to have no home—no resting-place to look to.—I am strangely cast off.—How often, passing through the rocks, I have thought, “But for this child, I would lay my head on one of them, and never open my eyes again!” With a heart feelingly alive to all the affections of my nature—I have never met with one, softer than the stone that I would fain

take for my last pillow. I once thought I had, but it was all a delusion. I meet with families continually, who are bound together by affection or principle—and, when I am conscious that I have fulfilled the duties of my station; almost to a forgetfulness of myself, I am ready to demand, in a murmuring tone, of Heaven, “Why am I thus abandoned?”

You say now

I do not understand you. It is necessary for you to write more explicitly—and determine on some mode of conduct.—I cannot endure this suspense—Decide—Do you fear to strike another blow? We live together, or eternally part!—I shall not write to you again, till I receive an answer to this. I must compose



once thought
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compose my tortured soul, before I
write on indifferent subjects. — —

— — — — —

I do not know whether I write intelligibly, for my head is disturbed.—But this you ought to pardon—for it is with difficulty frequently that I make out what you mean to say—You write, I suppose, at Mr. —'s after dinner, when your head is not the clearest—and as for your heart, if you have one, I see nothing like the dictates of affection, unless a glimpse when you mention the child.—
Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER LXVI.

September 25.

I HAVE just finished a letter, to be given in charge to captain ———. In that I complained of your silence, and expressed my surprise that three mails should have arrived without bringing a line for me. Since I closed it, I hear of another, and still no letter.—I am labouring to write calmly—this silence is a refinement on cruelty. Had captain ——— remained a few days longer, I would have returned with him to England. What have I to do here? I have repeatedly
I written

written to you fully. Do you do the same—and quickly. Do not leave me in suspense. I have not deserved this of you. I cannot write, my mind is so distressed. Adieu !

* * * *

END VOL. III.

POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF THE

AUTHOR

OF A

VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

V O L. IV.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, NO. 72, ST. PAUL'S
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PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1798.

LETTERS.

LETTER LXVII.

September 27.

WHEN you receive this, I shall either have landed, or be hovering on the British coast—your letter of the 18th decided me.

By what criterion of principle or affection, you term my questions extraordinary and unnecessary, I cannot determine.—You desire me to decide—I

VOL. IV.

B

had

had decided. You must have had long ago two letters of mine, from ———, to the same purport, to consider.—In these, God knows! there was but too much affection, and the agonies of a distracted mind were but too faithfully pourtrayed!—What more then had I to say?—The negative was to come from you.—You had perpetually recurred to your promise of meeting me in the autumn—Was it extraordinary that I should demand a yes, or no?—Your letter is written with extreme harshness, coldness I am accustomed to, in it I find not a trace of the tenderness of humanity, much less of friendship.—I only see a desire to heave a load off your shoulders.

I am above disputing about words.—It matters not in what terms you decide.

The

The tremendous power who formed this heart, must have foreseen that, in a world in which self-interest, in various shapes, is the principal mobile, I had little chance of escaping misery.—To the fiat of fate I submit.—I am content to be wretched; but I will not be contemptible.—Of me you have no cause to complain, but for having had too much regard for you—for having expected a degree of permanent happiness, when you only sought for a momentary gratification.

I am strangely deficient in sagacity.—Uniting myself to you, your tenderness seemed to make me amends for all my former misfortunes.—On this tenderness and affection with what confidence did I rest!—but I leaned on a spear, that has pierced me to the heart.—You have thrown off a faithful friend, to

B 2

pursue

pursue the caprices of the moment.—
We certainly are differently organized ;
for even now, when conviction has
been stamped on my soul by sorrow, I
can scarcely believe it possible. It de-
pends at present on you, whether you
will see me or not.—I shall take no
step, till I see or hear from you.

Preparing myself for the worst—I
have determined, if your next letter be
like the last, to write to Mr. ———
to procure me an obscure lodging, and
not to inform any body of my arrival.—
There I will endeavour in a few months
to obtain the sum necessary to take me
to France—from you I will not receive
any more.—I am not yet sufficiently
humbled to depend on your benefi-
cence.

Some people, whom my unhappi-
ness has interested, though they know
not

not the extent of it, will assist me to attain the object I have in view, the independence of my child. Should a peace take place, ready money will go a great way in France—and I will borrow a sum, which my industry *shall* enable me to pay at my leisure, to purchase a small estate for my girl.—The assistance I shall find necessary to complete her education, I can get at an easy rate at Paris—I can introduce her to such society as she will like—and thus, securing for her all the chance for happiness, which depends on me, I shall die in peace, persuaded that the felicity which has hitherto cheated my expectation, will not always elude my grasp. No poor tempest-tossed mariner ever more earnestly longed to arrive at his port.

* * * *

B 3

I shall

LETTERS.

I shall not come up in the vessel all the way, because I have no place to go to. Captain ——— will inform you where I am. It is needless to add, that I am not in a state of mind to bear suspense—and that I wish to see you, though it be for the last time.

LETTER LXVIII.

Sunday, October 4.

I wrote to you by the packet, to inform you, that your letter of the 18th of last month, had determined me to set out with captain ———; but, as we sailed very quick, I take it for granted, that you have not yet received it.

You

You say, I must decide for myself.— I had decided, that it was most for the interest of my little girl, and for my own comfort, little as I expect, for us to live together; and I even thought that you would be glad, some years hence, when the tumult of business was over, to repose in the society of an affectionate friend, and mark the progress of our interesting child, whilst endeavouring to be of use in the circle you at last resolved to rest in; for you cannot run about for ever.

From the tenour of your last letter however, I am led to imagine, that you have formed some new attachment.— If it be so, let me earnestly request you to see me once more, and immediately. This is the only proof I require of the friendship you profess for me. I will
B 4 then

then decide, since you boggle about a mere form.

I am labouring to write with calmness—but the extreme anguish I feel, at landing without having any friend to receive me, and even to be conscious that the friend whom I most wish to see, will feel a disagreeable sensation at being informed of my arrival, does not come under the description of common misery. Every emotion yields to an overwhelming flood of sorrow—and the playfulness of my child distresses me.—On her account, I wished to remain a few days here, comfortless as is my situation.—Besides, I did not wish to surprise you. You have told me, that you would make any sacrifice to promote my happiness—and, even in your last unkind letter, you talk of the ties which bind you to me and my child.

child.—Tell me, that you wish it, and I will cut this Gordian knot.

I now most earnestly intreat you to write to me, without fail, by the return of the post. Direct your letter to be left at the post-office, and tell me whether you will come to me here, or where you will meet me. I can receive your letter on Wednesday morning.

Do not keep me in suspense.—I expect nothing from you, or any human being: my die is cast!—I have fortitude enough to determine to do my duty; yet I cannot raise my depressed spirits, or calm my trembling heart.—That being who moulded it thus, knows that I am unable to tear up by the roots the propensity to affection which has been the torment of my life—but life will have an end!

Should

Should you come here (a few months ago I could not have doubted it) you will find me at ———. If you prefer meeting me on the road, tell me where.

Yours affectionately

* * * *

LETTER LXIX.

I WRITE you now on my knees; imploring you to send my child and the maid with ———, to Paris, to be consigned to the care of Madame ———, rue ———, section de ———. Should they be removed, ——— can give their direction.

Let the maid have all my clothes, without distinction.

Pray

Pray pay the cook her wages, and do not mention the confession which I forced from her—a little sooner or later is of no consequence. Nothing but my extreme stupidity could have rendered me blind so long. Yet, whilst you assured me that you had no attachment, I thought we might still have lived together.

I shall make no comments on your conduct; or any appeal to the world. Let my wrongs sleep with me! Soon, very soon shall I be at peace. When you receive this, my burning head will be cold.

I would encounter a thousand deaths, rather than a night like the last. Your treatment has thrown my mind into a state of chaos; yet I am serene. I go to find comfort, and my only fear is, that my poor body will be insulted by
an

an endeavour to recal my hated existence. But I shall plunge into the Thames where there is the least chance of my being snatched from the death I seek.

God bleſs you ! May you never know by experience what you have made me endure. Should your ſenſibility ever awake, remorse will find its way to your heart ; and, in the miſt of buſineſs and ſenſual pleaſure, I ſhall appear before you, the victim of your deviation from rectitude.

LETTER

L E T T E R LXX.

Sunday Morning.

I HAVE only to lament, that, when the bitterness of death was past, I was inhumanly brought back to life and misery. But a fixed determination is not to be baffled by disappointment; nor will I allow that to be a frantic attempt, which was one of the calmest acts of reason. In this respect, I am only accountable to myself. Did I care for what is termed reputation, it is by other circumstances that I should be dishonoured.

You say, "that you know not how to extricate ourselves out of the wretchedness into which we have been plunged."

You are extricated long since.—But I forbear to comment.—If I am condemned to live longer, it is a living death.

It appears to me, that you lay much more stress on delicacy, than on principle; for I am unable to discover what sentiment of delicacy would have been violated, by your visiting a wretched friend—if indeed you have any friendship for me.—But since your new attachment is the only thing sacred in your eyes, I am silent—Be happy! My complaints shall never more damp your enjoyment—perhaps I am mistaken in supposing that even my death could, for more than a moment.—This is what you call magnanimity.—It is happy for yourself, that you possess this quality in the highest degree.

Your continually asserting, that you
will

will do all in your power to contribute to my comfort (when you only allude to pecuniary assistance), appears to me a flagrant breach of delicacy.—I want not such vulgar comfort, nor will I accept it. I never wanted but your heart—That gone, you have nothing more to give. Had I only poverty to fear, I should not shrink from life.—Forgive me then, if I say, that I shall consider any direct or indirect attempt to supply my necessities, as an insult which I have not merited—and as rather done out of tenderness for your own reputation, than for me. Do not mistake me; I do not think that you value money (therefore I will not accept what you do not care for) though I do much less, because certain privations are not painful to me.

When

When I am dead, respect for yourself
will make you take care of the child.

I write with difficulty—probably I
shall never write to you again.—Adieu!

God bless you!

LETTER LXXI.

Monday Morning.

I AM compelled at last to say that
you treat me ungenerously. I agree
with you, that

—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—

But

But let the obliquity now fall on me.—
I fear neither poverty nor infamy. I am
unequal to the task of writing—and
explanations are not necessary. —

— — — — —
— — — — —

My child may have to blush for her
mother's want of prudence—and may
lament that the rectitude of my heart
made me above vulgar precautions;
but she shall not despise me for mean-
ness.—You are now perfectly free.—
God bless you.

* * * *

LETTER LXXIII.

Saturday Night,

I HAVE been hurt by indirect enquiries, which appear to me not to be dictated by any tenderness to me.—You ask “If I am well or tranquil?”—They who think me so, must want a heart to estimate my feelings by.—I chuse then to be the organ of my own sentiments.

I must tell you, that I am very much mortified by your continually offering me pecuniary assistance—and, considering your going to the new house, as an open avowal that you abandon me, let
me

me tell you that I will sooner perish than receive any thing from you—and I say this at the moment when I am disappointed in my first attempt to obtain a temporary supply. But this even pleases me ; an accumulation of disappointments and misfortunes seems to suit the habit of my mind.—

Have but a little patience, and I will remove myself where it will not be necessary for you to talk—of course, not to think of me. But let me see, written by yourself—for I will not receive it through any other medium—that the affair is finished.—It is an insult to me to suppose, that I can be reconciled, or recover my spirits ; but, if you hear nothing of me, it will be the same thing to you.

* * * *

Even your seeing me, has been to oblige other people, and not to soothe my distracted mind.

LETTER LXXIV.

Thursday Afternoon.

MR. ——— having forgot to desire you to send the things of mine which were left at the house, I have to request you to let ——— bring them o
———.

I shall go this evening to the lodging ; so you need not be restrained from coming here to transact your business.— And, whatever I may think, and feel—
you

you need not fear that I shall publicly complain—No ! If I have any criterion to judge of right and wrong, I have been most ungenerously treated : but, wishing now only to hide myself, I shall be silent as the grave in which I long to forget myself. I shall protect and provide for my child.—I only mean by this to say, that you having nothing to fear from my desperation.

Farewel.

* * * *

LETTER LXXV.

London, November 27.

THE letter, without an address, which you put up with the letters you returned, did not meet my eyes till just now.—I had thrown the letters aside—I did not wish to look over a register of sorrow.

My not having seen it, will account for my having written to you with anger—under the impression your departure, without even a line left for me, made on me, even after your late conduct, which could not lead me to expect much attention to my sufferings.

In fact, “the decided conduct, which
appeared

appeared to me so unfeeling," has almost overturned my reason; my mind is injured—I scarcely know where I am, or what I do.—The grief I cannot conquer (for some cruel recollections never quit me, banishing almost every other) I labour to conceal in total solitude.—My life therefore is but an exercise of fortitude, continually on the stretch—and hope never gleams in this tomb, where I am buried alive.

But I meant to reason with you, and not to complain.—You tell me, "that I shall judge more coolly of your mode of acting, some time hence." But is it not possible that *passion* clouds your reason, as much as it does mine?—and ought you not to doubt, whether those principles are so "exalted," as you term them, which only lead to your own gratification? In other words,

C 4

whether

whether it be just to have no principle of action, but that of following your inclination, trampling on the affection you have fostered, and the expectations you have excited?

My affection for you is rooted in my heart.—I know you are not what you now seem—nor will you always act, or feel, as you now do, though I may never be comforted by the change.—Even at Paris, my image will haunt you.—You will see my pale face—and sometimes the tears of anguish will drop on your heart, which you have forced from mine.

I cannot write. I thought I could quickly have refuted all your *ingenious* arguments ; but my head is confused.—Right or wrong, I am miserable!

It seems to me, that my conduct has always been governed by the strictest principles of justice and truth.—Yet,
how

how wretched have my social feelings, and delicacy of sentiment rendered me! —I have loved with my whole soul, only to discover that I had no chance of a return—and that existence is a burthen without it.

I do not perfectly understand you.—If, by the offer of your friendship, you still only mean pecuniary support—I must again reject it.—Trifling are the ills of poverty in the scale of my misfortunes.—God bless you!

* * * *

I have been treated ungenerously—if I understand what is generosity.—You seem to me only to have been anxious to shake me off—regardless whether you dashed me to atoms by the fall.—In truth I have been rudely handled. *Do you judge coolly*, and I trust
you

you will not continue to call those capricious feelings "the most refined," which would undermine not only the most sacred principles, but the affections which unite mankind.—You would render mothers unnatural—and there would be no such thing as a father!—If your theory of morals is the most "exalted," it is certainly the most easy.—It does not require much magnanimity, to determine to please ourselves for the moment, let others suffer what they will!

Excuse me for again tormenting you, my heart thirsts for justice from you—and whilst I recollect that you approved Miss ——'s conduct—I am convinced you will not always justify your own.

Beware of the deceptions of passion!
It will not always banish from your
i mind,

mind, that you have acted ignobly—
and condescended to subterfuge to
gloss over the conduct you could not
excuse.—Do truth and principle require
such sacrifices?

LETTER LXXVI.

London, December 8.

HAVING just been informed that
—— is to return immediately to
Paris, I would not miss a sure oppor-
tunity of writing, because I am not
certain that my last, by Dover has
reached you.

Resentment, and even anger, are
momentary emotions with me—and
I wished

I wished to tell you so, that if you ever think of me, it may not be in the light of an enemy.

That I have not been used *well* I must ever feel; perhaps, not always with the keen anguish I do at present—for I began even now to write calmly, and I cannot restrain my tears.

I am stunned!—Your late conduct still appears to me a frightful dream.—Ah! ask yourself if you have not condescended to employ a little address, I could almost say cunning, unworthy of you?—Principles are sacred things—and we never play with truth, with impunity.

The expectation (I have too fondly nourished it) of regaining your affection, every day grows fainter and fainter.—Indeed, it seems to me, when I am more sad than usual, that I shall
never:

never see you more.—Yet you will not always forget me.—You will feel something like remorse, for having lived only for yourself—and sacrificed my peace to inferior gratifications. In a comfortless old age, you will remember that you had one disinterested friend, whose heart you wounded to the quick. The hour of recollection will come—and you will not be satisfied to act the part of a boy, till you fall into that of a dotard. I know that your mind, your heart, and your principles of action, are all superior to your present conduct. You do, you must, respect me—and you will be sorry to forfeit my esteem.

You know best whether I am still preserving the remembrance of an imaginary being.—I once thought that I knew you thoroughly—but now I am obliged to leave some doubts that
5 involuntarily

involuntarily press on me, to be cleared up by time.

You may render me unhappy; but cannot make me contemptible in my own eyes.—I shall still be able to support my child, though I am disappointed in some other plans of usefulness, which I once believed would have afforded you equal pleasure.

Whilst I was with you, I restrained my natural generosity, because I thought your property in jeopardy.—When I went to ———, I requested you, *if you could conveniently*, not to forget my father, sisters, and some other people, whom I was interested about.—Money was lavished away, yet not only my requests were neglected, but some trifling debts were not discharged, that now come on me.—Was this friendship—or generosity? Will you not grant
you

you have forgotten yourself? Still
I have an affection for you.—God
bless you.

* * * *

LETTER LXXVII.

As the parting from you for ever is
the most serious event of my life, I will
once expostulate with you, and call
not the language of truth and feeling
ingenuity!

I know the soundness of your under-
standing—and know that it is impos-
sible for you always to confound the
caprices of every wayward inclination
with the manly dictates of principle.

You

You tell me "that I torment you."—Why do I?—Because you cannot estrange your heart entirely from me—and you feel that justice is on my side. You urge, "that your conduct was unequivocal."—It was not.—When your coolness has hurt me, with what tenderness have you endeavoured to remove the impression!—and even before I returned to England, you took great pains to convince me, that all my uneasiness was occasioned by the effect of a worn-out constitution—and you concluded your letter with these words, "Business alone has kept me from you.—Come to any port, and I will fly down to my two dear girls with a heart all their own."

With these assurances, is it extraordinary that I should believe what I wished? I might—and did think that
you

you had a struggle with old propensities; but I still thought that I and virtue should at last prevail. I still thought that you had a magnanimity of character, which would enable you to conquer yourself.

———, believe me, it is not romance, you have acknowledged to me feelings of this kind.—You could restore me to life and hope, and the satisfaction you would feel, would amply repay you.

In tearing myself from you, it is my own heart I pierce—and the time will come, when you will lament that you have thrown away a heart, that, even in the moment of passion, you cannot despise.—I would owe every thing to your generosity—but, for God's sake, keep me no longer in suspense!—Let me see you once more!—

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D

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

You must do as you please with respect to the child.—I could wish that it might be done soon, that my name may be no more mentioned to you. It is now finished.—Convinced that you have neither regard nor friendship, I disdain to utter a reproach, though I have had reason to think, that the “forbearance” talked of, has not been very delicate.—It is however of no consequence.—I am glad you are satisfied with your own conduct.

I now solemnly assure you, that this is an eternal farewell.—Yet I flinch not from the duties which tie me to life.

That

That there is "sophistry" on one side or other, is certain; but now it matters not on which. On my part it has not been a question of words. Yet your understanding or mine must be strangely warped—for what you term "delicacy," appears to me to be exactly the contrary. I have no criterion for morality, and have thought in vain, if the sensations which lead you to follow an angle or step, be the sacred foundation of principle and affection. Mine has been of a very different nature, or it would not have stood the brunt of your sarcasms.

The sentiment in me is still sacred. If there be any part of me that will survive the sense of my misfortunes, it is the purity of my affections. The impetuosity of your senses, may have led you to term mere animal desire, the

source of principle ; and it may give zest to some years to come.—Whether you will always think so, I shall never know.

It is strange that, in spite of all you do, something like conviction forces me to believe, that you are not what you appear to be.

I part with you in peace.

LETTER

LETTER

ON THE

PRESENT CHARACTER

OF THE

FRENCH NATION.

D 3

LETTER

Introductory to a Series of Letters on the Present Character of the French Nation.

Paris, February 15, 1793.

My dear friend,

IT is necessary perhaps for an observer of mankind, to guard as carefully the remembrance of the first impression made by a nation, as by a countenance ; because we imperceptibly lose sight of the national character, when we become more intimate with individuals. It is not then useless or presumptuous to note, that, when I first entered Paris,

D 4.

the

the striking contrast of riches and poverty, elegance and slovenliness, urbanity and deceit, every where caught my eye, and saddened my soul; and these impressions are still the foundation of my remarks on the manners, which flatter the senses, more than they interest the heart, and yet excite more interest than esteem.

The whole mode of life here tends indeed to render the people frivolous, and, to borrow their favourite epithet, amiable. Ever on the wing, they are always sipping the sparkling joy on the brim of the cup, leaving satiety in the bottom for those who venture to drink deep. On all sides they trip along, buoyed up by animal spirits, and seemingly so void of care, that often, when I am walking on the *Boulevards*, it occurs to me, that they alone understand the

the full import of the term leisure ; and they trifle their time away with such an air of contentment, I know not how to wish them wiser at the expence of their gaiety. They play before me like motes in a sunbeam, enjoying the passing ray ; whilst an English head, searching for more solid happiness, loses, in the analysis of pleasure, the volatile sweets of the moment. Their chief enjoyment, it is true, rises from vanity : but it is not the vanity that engenders vexation of spirit ; on the contrary, it lightens the heavy burthen of life, which reason too often weighs, merely to shift from one shoulder to the other.

Investigating the modification of the passion, as I would analyze the elements that give a form to dead matter, I shall attempt to trace to their source
the

the causes which have combined to render this nation the most polished, in a physical sense, and probably the most superficial in the world ; and I mean to follow the windings of the various streams that disembogue into a terrific gulf, in which all the dignity of our nature is absorbed. For every thing has conspired to make the French the most sensual people in the world ; and what can render the heart so hard, or so effectually stifle every moral emotion, as the refinements of sensuality ?

The frequent repetition of the word French, appears invidious ; let me then make a previous observation, which I beg you not to lose sight of, when I speak rather harshly of a land flowing with milk and honey. Remember that it is not the morals of a particular people that I would decry ; for are we
not

not all of the same stock? But I wish calmly to consider the stage of civilization in which I find the French, and, giving a sketch of their character, and unfolding the circumstances which have produced its identity, I shall endeavour to throw some light on the history of man, and on the present important subjects of discussion.

I would I could first inform you that, out of the chaos of vices and follies, prejudices and virtues, rudely jumbled together, I saw the fair form of Liberty slowly rising, and Virtue expanding her wings to shelter all her children! I should then hear the account of the barbarities that have rent the bosom of France patiently, and bless the firm hand that lopt off the rotten limbs. But, if the aristocracy of birth is levelled with the ground, only to make room

for that of riches, I am afraid that the morals of the people will not be much improved by the change, or the government rendered less venal. Still it is not just to dwell on the misery produced by the present struggle, without adverting to the standing evils of the old system. I am grieved—sorely grieved—when I think of the blood that has stained the cause of freedom at Paris; but I also hear the same live stream cry aloud from the highways, through which the retreating armies passed with famine and death in their rear, and I hide my face with awe before the inscrutable ways of providence, sweeping in such various directions the besom of destruction over the sons of men.

Before I came to France, I cherished, you know, an opinion, that strong virtues—

taes might exist with the polished manners produced by the progress of civilization; and I even anticipated the epoch, when, in the course of improvement, men would labour to become virtuous, without being goaded on by misery. But now, the perspective of the golden age, fading before the attentive eye of observation, almost eludes my sight; and, losing thus in part my theory of a more perfect state, start not, my friend, if I bring forward an opinion, which at the first glance seems to be levelled against the existence of God! I am not become an Atheist, I assure you, by residing at Paris: yet I begin to fear that vice, or, if you will, evil, is the grand mobile of action, and that, when the passions are justly poised, we become harmless, and in the same proportion useless.

The wants of reason are very few; and, were we to consider dispassionately the real value of most things, we should probably rest satisfied with the simple gratification of our physical necessities, and be content with negative goodness: for it is frequently, only that wanton, the Imagination, with her artful coquetry, who lures us forward, and makes us run over a rough road, pushing aside every obstacle merely to catch a disappointment.

The desire also of being useful to others, is continually damped by experience; and, if the exertions of humanity were not in some measure their own reward, who would endure misery, or struggle with care, to make some people ungrateful, and others idle?

You will call these melancholy effusions,

sions, and guess that, fatigued by the vivacity, which has all the bustling folly of childhood, without the innocence which renders ignorance charming, I am too severe in my strictures. It may be so; and I am aware that the good effects of the revolution will be last felt at Paris; where surely the soul of Epicurus has long been at work to root out the simple emotions of the heart, which, being natural, are always moral. Rendered cold and artificial by the selfish enjoyments of the senses, which the government fostered, is it surprising that simplicity of manners, and singleness of heart, rarely appear, to recreate me with the wild odour of nature, so passing sweet?

Seeing how deep the fibres of mischief have shot, I sometimes ask, with a doubting accent, Whether a nation can

go back to the purity of manners which has hitherto been maintained un sullied only by the keen air of poverty, when, emasculated by pleasure, the luxuries of prosperity are become the wants of nature? I cannot yet give up the hope, that a fairer day is dawning on Europe, though I must hesitatingly observe, that little is to be expected from the narrow principle of commerce which seems every where to be shoving aside *the point of honour* of the *noblesse*. I can look beyond the exils of the moment, and do not expect muddied water to become clear before it has had time to stand; yet, even for the moment, it is the most terrific of all sights, to see men vicious without warmth—to see the order that should be, the superscription of virtue, cultivated to give security to crimes which only thoughtlessness could palliate.

palliate. Disorder is, in fact, the very essence of vice, though with the wild wishes of a corrupt fancy humane emotions often kindly mix to soften their atrocity. Thus humanity, generosity, and even self-denial, sometimes render a character grand, and even useful, when hurried away by lawless passions; but what can equal the turpitude of a cold calculator who lives for himself alone, and considering his fellow-creatures merely as machines of pleasure, never forgets that honesty is the best policy? Keeping ever within the pale of the law, he crushes his thousands with impunity; but it is with that degree of management, which makes him, to borrow a significant vulgarism, a villain *in grain*. The very excess of his depravation preserves him, whilst the more respectable beast of prey, who prowls

VOL. IV. E about

about like the lion, and roars to announce his approach, falls into a snare.

You may think it too soon to form an opinion of the future government, yet it is impossible to avoid hazarding some conjectures, when every thing whispers me, that names, not principles, are changed, and when I see that the turn of the tide has left the dregs of the old system to corrupt the new. For the same pride of office, the same desire of power are still visible ; with this aggravation, that, fearing to return to obscurity after having but just acquired a relish for distinction, each hero, or philosopher, for all are dubbed with these new titles, endeavours to make hay while the sun shines ; and every petty municipal officer, become the idol, or rather the tyrant of the day, stalks like a cock on a dunghil.

I shall

I shall now conclude this desultory letter; which however will enable you to foresee that I shall treat more of morals than manners.

Yours ———

F R A G M E N T
OF
L E T T E R S
ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF INFANTS.

C O N T E N T S.

Introductory Letter.

LETTER II. Management of the Mother during pregnancy : bathing.

LETTER III. Lying-in.

LETTER IV. The first month : diet : clothing.

LETTER V. The three following months.

LETTER VI. The remainder of the first year.

LETTER VII. The second year, &c: conclusion.

LETTERS

ON THE

MANAGEMENT OF INFANTS.

LETTER I.

I OUGHT to apologize for not having written to you on the subject you mentioned ; but, to tell you the truth, it grew upon me : and, instead of an answer, I have begun a series of letters on the management of children in their infancy. Replying then to your question, I have the public in my

E 4 thoughts,

thoughts, and shall endeavour to show what modes appear to me necessary, to render the infancy of children more healthy and happy. I have long thought, that the cause which renders children as hard to rear as the most fragile plant, is our deviation from simplicity. I know that some able physicians have recommended the method I have pursued, and I mean to point out the good effects I have observed in practice. I am aware that many matrons will exclaim against me, and dwell on the number of children they have brought up, as their mothers did before them, without troubling themselves with new-fangled notions; yet, though, in my uncle Toby's words, they should attempt to silence me, by "wishing I had seen their large" families, I must suppose, while a third part
of

of the human species, according to the most accurate calculation, die during their infancy, just at the threshold of life, that there is some error in the modes adopted by mothers and nurses, which counteracts their own endeavours. I may be mistaken in some particulars ; for general rules, founded on the soundest reason, demand individual modification ; but, if I can persuade any of the rising generation to exercise their reason on this head, I am content. My advice will probably be found most useful to mothers in the middle class ; and it is from them that the lower imperceptibly gains improvement. Custom, produced by reason in one, may safely be the effect of imitation in the other.— — —
— — — — —

L E T T E R S
TO
Mr. J O H N S O N,
BOOKSELLER,
IN
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

LETTERS

TO

Mr. JOHNSON.

LETTER I.

Dublin, April 14, [1787.]

Dear sir,

I AM still an invalid—and begin to believe that I ought never to expect to enjoy health. My mind preys on my body—and, when I endeavour to be useful, I grow too much interested for my own peace. Confined almost entirely to the society of children, I am anxiously solicitous for their future welfare, and mortified beyond measure,

when counteracted in my endeavours to improve them.—I feel all a mother's fears for the swarm of little ones which surround me, and observe disorders, without having power to apply the proper remedies. How can I be reconciled to life, when it is always a painful warfare, and when I am deprived of all the pleasures I relish?—I allude to rational conversations, and domestic affections. Here, alone, a poor solitary individual in a strange land, tied to one spot, and subject to the caprice of another, can I be contented? I am desirous to convince you that I have *some* cause for sorrow—and am not without reason detached from life. I shall hope to hear that you are well, and am yours sincerely

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

Henley, Thursday, Sept. 13.

My dear sir,

SINCE I saw you, I have, literally speaking, *enjoyed* solitude. My sister could not accompany me in my rambles; I therefore wandered alone, by the side of the Thames, and in the neighbouring beautiful fields and pleasure grounds: the prospects were of such a placid kind, I *caught* tranquillity while I surveyed them—my mind was *still*, though active. Were I to give you an account how I have spent my time, you would smile.—I found an old French bible here, and amused myself with comparing it with our

3

English

English translation ; then I would listen to the falling leaves, or observe the various tints the autumn gave to them—At other times, the singing of a robin, or the noise of a water-mill, engaged my attention—partial attention—, for I was, at the same time perhaps discussing some knotty point, or straying from this *tiny* world to new systems. After these excursions, I returned to the family meals, told the children stories (they think me *vastly* agreeable), and my sister was amused.—Well, will you allow me to call this way of passing my days pleasant?

I was just going to mend my pen ; but I believe it will enable me to say all I have to add to this epistle. Have you yet heard of an habitation for me ? I often think of my new plan of life ; and, lest my sister should try to prevail
on

on me to alter it, I have avoided mentioning it to her. I am determined!—Your sex generally laugh at female determinations; but let me tell you, I never yet resolved to do, any thing of consequence, that I did not adhere resolutely to it, till I had accomplished my purpose, improbable as it might have appeared to a more timid mind. In the course of near nine-and-twenty years, I have gathered some experience, and felt many *severe* disappointments—and what is the amount? I long for a little peace and *independence*! Every obligation we receive from our fellow-creatures is a new shackle, takes from our native freedom, and debases the mind, makes us mere earthworms—I am not fond of grovelling!

I am, sir, yours, &c.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

VOL. IV.

F

LETTER

L E T T E R. III.

Market Harborough, Sept. 20.

My dear sir,

You left me with three opulent tradesmen ; their conversation was not calculated to beguile the way, when the sable curtain concealed the beauties of nature. I listened to the tricks of trade—and shrunk away, without wishing to grow rich ; even the novelty of the subjects did not render them pleasing ; fond as I am of tracing the passions in all their different forms—I was not surpris'd by any glimpse of the sublime, or beautiful—though one of them imagined I should be a useful partner in a good *firm*. I was very much fatigued, and have scarcely recovered myself.

myself. I do not expect to enjoy the same tranquil pleasures Henley afforded : I meet with new objects to employ my mind ; but many painful emotions are complicated with the reflections they give rise to.

I do not intend to enter on the *old* topic, yet hope to hear from you—and am yours, &c.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

LETTER IV.

Friday Night.

My dear sir,

THOUGH your remarks are generally judicious—I cannot *now* concur with you, I mean with respect to the preface*,

* To Original Stories.

F 2

and

and have not altered it. I hate the usual smooth way of exhibiting proud humility. A general rule *only* extends to the majority—and, believe me, the few judicious parents who may peruse my book, will not feel themselves hurt—and the weak are too vain to mind what is said in a book intended for children.

I return you the Italian MS.—but do not hastily imagine that I am indolent. I would not spare any labour to do my duty—and, after the most laborious day, that single thought would solace me more than any pleasures the senses could enjoy. I find I could not ~~translate~~ the MS. well. If it was not a MS, I should not be so easily intimidated; but the hand, and errors in orthography, or abbreviations, are a stumbling-block at the first setting out.—I cannot bear to do any thing I cannot

cannot do well—and I should lose time in the vain attempt.

I had, the other day, the satisfaction of again receiving a letter from my poor, dear Margaret*.—With all a mother's fondness I could transcribe a part of it—She says, every day her affection to me, and dependence on heaven increase, &c.—I miss her innocent caresses—and sometimes indulge a pleasing hope, that she may be allowed to cheer my childless age—if I am to live to be old.—At any rate, I may hear of the virtues I may not contemplate—and my reason may permit me to love a female.—I now allude to ———. I have received another letter from her, and her childish complaints vex me—indeed they do—As usual, good-night. MARY.

* Countess Mount Cashel.

If parents attended to their children,
I would not have written the stories;
for, what are books—compared to con-
versations which affection enforces!—

LETTER V.

My dear sir,

REMEMBER you are to settle *my ac-
count*, as I want to know how much I
am in your debt—but do not suppose
that I feel any uneasiness on that score.
The generality of people in trade
would not be much obliged to me for a
like civility, *but you were a man* before
you were a bookseller—so I am your
sincere friend,

MARY.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Friday Morning.

I AM sick with vexation—and wish I could knock my foolish head against the wall, that bodily pain might make me feel less anguish from self-reproach ! To say the truth, I was never more displeased with myself, and I will tell you the cause.—You may recollect that I did not mention to you the circumstance of ——— having a fortune left to him ; nor did a hint of it drop from me when I conversed with my sister ; because I knew he had a sufficient motive for concealing it. Last Sunday, when his character was aspersed, as I thought, unjustly, in the heat of vindication

F 4

cation I informed ***** that he was now independent; but, at the same time, desired him not to repeat my information to B——; yet, last Tuesday, he told him all—and the boy at B——'s gave Mrs. —— an account of it. As Mr. —— knew he had only made a confidant of me (I blush to think of it!) he guessed the channel of intelligence, and this morning came (not to reproach me, I wish he had!) but to point out the injury I have done him.—Let what will be the consequence, I will reimburse him, if I deny myself the necessaries of life—and even then my folly will sting me.—Perhaps you can scarcely conceive the misery I at this moment endure—that I, whose power of doing good is so limited, should do harm, galls my very soul. ***** may laugh at these qualms—but, supposing Mr.

—— to be unworthy, I am not the less to blame. Surely it is hell to despise one's self!—I did not want this additional vexation—at this time I have many that hang heavily on my spirits. I shall not call on you this month—nor stir out.—My stomach has been so suddenly and violently affected, I am unable to lean over the desk.

MARY WOLISTONECRAFT.

LETTER VII.

As I am become a reviewer, I think it right, in the way of business, to consider the subject. You have alarmed the editor of the Critical, as the advertisement prefixed to the Appendix plainly

plainly shows. The Critical appears to me to be a timid, mean production, and its success is a reflection on the taste and judgment of the public ; but, as a body, who ever gave it credit for much ? The voice of the people is only the voice of truth, when some man of abilities has had time to get fast hold of the GREAT NOSE of the monster. Of course, local fame is generally a clamour, and dies away. The Appendix to the Monthly afforded me more amusement, though every article almost wants energy and a *cant* of virtue and liberality is strewed over it ; always tame, and eager to pay court to established fame. The account of Necker is one unvaried tone of admiration. Surely men were born only to provide for the sustenance of the body by enfeebling the mind !

MART.

LETTER

L E T T E R V I I I .

You made me very low-spirited last night, by your manner of talking.— You are my only friend—the only person I am *intimate* with.—I never had a father, or a brother—you have been both to me, ever since I knew you—yet I have sometimes been very petulant.— I have been thinking of those instances of ill-humour and quickness, and they appeared like crimes.

Yours sincerely

- MARY.

LETTER

L E T T E R IX.

Saturday Night.

I AM a mere animal, and instinctive emotions too often silence the suggestions of reason. Your note—I can scarcely tell why; hurt me—and produced a kind of winterly smile, which diffuses a beam of despondent tranquillity over the features. I have been very ill—Heaven knows it was more than fancy—After some sleepless, wearisome nights, towards the morning I have grown delirious.—Last Thursday, in particular, I imagined —— was thrown into great distress by his folly; and I, unable to assist him, was in an agony. My nerves were in such a
painful

painful state of irritation—I suffered more than I can express—Society was necessary—and might have diverted me till I gained more strength; but I blushed when I recollected how often I had teased you with childish complaints, and the reveries of a disordered imagination. I even *imagined* that I intruded on you, because you never called on me—though you perceived that I was not well.—I have nourished a sickly kind of delicacy, which gives me many unnecessary pangs.—I acknowledge that life is but a jest—and often a frightful dream—yet catch myself every day searching for something serious—and feel real misery from the disappointment. I am a strange compound of weakness and resolution! However, if I must suffer, I will endeavour to suffer in silence.

There is certainly a great defect in my mind—my wayward heart creates its own misery—Why I am made thus I cannot tell; and, till I can form some idea of the whole of my existence, I must be content to weep and dance like a child—long for a toy, and be tired of it as soon as I get it.

We must each of us wear a fool's cap; but mine, alas! has lost its bells, and is grown so heavy, I find it intolerably troublesome.—Good-night! I have been pursuing a number of strange thoughts since I began to write, and have actually both wept and laughed immoderately—Surely I am a fool—

MARY W.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Monday Morning.

I REALLY want a German grammar, as I intend to attempt to learn that language—and I will tell you the reason why.—While I live, I am persuaded, I must exert my understanding to procure an independence, and render myself useful. To make the task easier, I ought to store my mind with knowledge—The seed-time is passing away. I see the necessity of labouring now—and of that necessity I do not complain; on the contrary, I am thankful that I have more than common incentives to pursue knowledge, and draw my pleasures

4

fures from the employments that are within my reach. You perceive this is not a gloomy day—I feel at this moment particularly grateful to you—without your humane and *delicate* assistance, how many obstacles should I not have had to encounter—too often should I have been out of patience with my fellow-creatures, whom I wish to love!—Allow me to love you, my dear sir, and call friend a being I respect.—Adieu!

MARY W.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

I THOUGHT you *very* unkind, nay, very unfeeling, last night. My cares and vexations—I will say what I allow myself to think—do me honour, as they arise from my disinterestedness and *unbending* principles; nor can that mode of conduct be a reflection on my understanding, which enables me to bear misery, rather than selfishly live for myself alone. I am not the only character deserving of respect, that has had to struggle with various sorrows—while inferior minds have enjoyed local fame and present comfort.—Dr. Johnson's cares almost drove him mad—but, I suppose, you would quietly have told him, he was a fool for not being calm, and that wise men striving against the

VOL. IV. G stream,

stream, can yet be in good humour. I have done with insensible human wisdom,—“indifference cold in wisdom’s guise,”—and turn to the source of perfection—who perhaps never disregarded an almost broken heart, especially when a respect, a practical respect, for virtue, sharpened the wounds of adversity. I am ill—I stayed in bed this morning till eleven o’clock, only thinking of getting money to extricate myself out of some of my difficulties—The struggle is now over. I will condescend to try to obtain some in a disagreeable way.

Mr. —— called on me just now—pray did you know his motive for calling*?—I think him impertinently offi-

* This alludes to a foolish proposal of marriage for mercenary considerations, which the gentleman here mentioned thought proper to recommend to her. The two letters which immediately follow, are addressed to the gentleman himself.

cious.—

scious.—He had left the house before it occurred to me in the strong light it does now, or I should have told him so—My poverty makes me proud—I will not be insulted by a superficial puppy.—His intimacy with Miss —— gave him a privilege, which he should not have assumed with me—a proposal might be made to his cousin, a milliner's girl, which should not have been mentioned to me. Pray tell him that I am offended—and do not wish to see him again!—When I meet him at your house, I shall leave the room, since I cannot pull him by the nose. I can force my spirit to leave my body—but it shall never bend to support that body—God of heaven, save thy child from this living death!—I scarcely know what I write. My hand trembles—I am very sick—sick at heart.—

MARY.

LETTER XII.

Tuesday Evening.

Sir,

WHEN you left me this morning, and I reflected a moment—your *officious* message, which at first appeared to me a joke—looked so very like an insult—I cannot forget it—To prevent then the necessity of forcing a smile—when I chance to meet you—I take the earliest opportunity of informing you of my real sentiments.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Wednesday, 3 o'clock.

Sir,

It is inexpressibly disagreeable to me to be obliged to enter again on a subject, that has already raised a tumult of *indignant* emotions in my bosom, which I was labouring to suppress when I received your letter. I shall now *condescend* to answer your epistle ; but let me first tell you, that, in my *unprotected* situation, I make a point of never forgiving a *deliberate insult*—and in that light I consider your late officious conduct. It is not according to my nature to mince matters—I will then tell you in

G 3

plain

plain terms, what I think. I have ever considered you in the light of a *civil* acquaintance—on the word friend I lay a peculiar emphasis—and, as a mere acquaintance, you were rude and *cruel*, to step forward to insult a woman, whose conduct and misfortunes demand respect. If my friend, Mr. Johnson, had' made the proposal—I should have been severely hurt—have thought him unkind and unfeeling, but not *impertinent*.—The privilege of intimacy you had no claim to—and should have referred the man to myself—if you had not sufficient discernment to quash it at once. I am, sir, poor and destitute.—Yet I have a spirit that will never bend, or take indirect methods, to obtain the consequence I despise; nay, if to support life it was necessary to act contrary to my principles, the struggle

would soon be over. I can bear any thing but my own contempt.

In a few words, what I call an insult, is the bare supposition that I could for a moment think of *prostituting* my person for a maintenance; for in that point of view does such a marriage appear to me, who consider right and wrong in the abstract, and never by words and local opinions shield myself from the reproaches of my own heart and understanding.

It is needless to say more—Only you must excuse me when I add, that I wish never to see, but as a perfect stranger, a person who could so grossly mistake my character. An apology is not necessary—if you were inclined to make one—nor any further expostulations.—I again repeat, I cannot overlook an affront; few indeed have sufficient de-

licacy to respect poverty, even where it gives lustre to a character—and I tell you fir, I am BOOR—yet can live without your benevolent exertions.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

L E T T E R X I V .

I SEND you *all* the books I had to review except Dr. J—'s Sermons, which I have begun. If you wish me to look over any more trash this month—you must send it directly. I have been so low-spirited since I saw you—I was quite glad, last night, to feel myself affected by some passages in Dr. J—'s sermon on the death of his wife—I
seemed

seemed (suddenly) to *find* my *soul* again—It has been for some time I cannot tell where. Send me the Speaker—and *Mary*, I want one—and I shall soon want some paper—you may as well send it at the same time—for I am trying to brace my nerves that I may be industrious.—I am afraid reason is not a good bracer—for I have been reasoning a long time with my untoward spirits—and yet my hand trembles.—I could finish a period very *prettily* now, by saying that it ought to be steady when I add that I am yours sincerely,

MARY.

If you do not like the manner in which I reviewed Dr. J—'s f—— on his wife, be it known unto you—I *will* not do it any other way—I felt some pleasure in paying a just tribute of respect

spect to the memory of a man—who, spite of his faults, I have an affection for—I say *have*, for I believe he is somewhere—*where* my soul has been gadding perhaps;—but *you* do not live on conjectures.

L E T T E R XV.

My dear sir, I send you a chapter which I am pleased with, now I see it in one point of view—and, as I have made free with the author, I hope you will not have often to say—what does this mean?

You forgot you were to make out
my

my account—I am, of course, over head and ears in debt; but I have not that kind of pride, which makes some dislike to be obliged to those they respect.—On the contrary, when I involuntarily lament that I have not a father or brother, I thankfully recollect that I have received unexpected kindness from you and a few others.—So reason allows, what nature impels me to—for I cannot live without loving my fellow-creatures—nor can I love them, without discovering some virtue.

MARY.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Paris, December 26, 1792;

I SHOULD immediately on the receipt of your letter, my dear friend, have thanked you for your punctuality, for it highly gratified me, had I not wished to wait till I could tell you that this day was not stained with blood. Indeed the prudent precautions taken by the National Convention to prevent a tumult, made me suppose that the dogs of faction would not dare to bark, much less to bite, however true to their scent; and I was not mistaken; for the citizens, who were all called out, are returning home with composed countenances,

nances, shouldering their arms. About nine o'clock this morning, the king passed by my window, moving silently along (excepting now and then a few strokes on the drum, which rendered the stillness more awful) through empty streets, surrounded by the national guards, who, clustering round the carriage, seemed to deserve their name. The inhabitants flocked to their windows, but the casements were all shut, not a voice was heard, nor did I see any thing like an insulting gesture.—For the first time since I entered France, I bowed to the majesty of the people, and respected the propriety of behaviour so perfectly in unison with my own feelings. I can scarcely tell you why, but an association of ideas made the tears flow insensibly from my eyes, when I saw Louis sitting, with more
2 dignity

dignity than I expected from his character, in a hackney coach, going to meet death, where so many of his race have triumphed. My fancy instantly brought Louis XIV before me, entering the capital with all his pomp, after one of the victories most flattering to his pride, only to see the sunshine of prosperity overshadowed by the sublime gloom of misery. I have been alone ever since; and, though my mind is calm, I cannot dismiss the lively images that have filled my imagination all the day.—Nay, do not smile, but pity me; for, once or twice, lifting my eyes from the paper, I have seen eyes glare through a glass-door opposite my chair, and bloody hands shook at me. Not the distant sound of a footstep can I hear.—My apartments are remote from those of the servants, the only persons
who

who sleep with me in an immense hotel,
one folding door opening after another.
—I wish I had even kept the cat with
me!—I want to see something alive;
death in so many frightful shapes has
taken hold of my fancy.—I am going to
bed—and, for the first time in my life, I
cannot put out the candle.

M. W.

E X T R A C T
OF THE
CAVE OF FANCY.
A TALE.

[Begun to be written in the year 1787, but never completed]

VOL. IV.

H

CAVE OF FANCY.

CHAP. I.

YE who expect constancy where every thing is changing, and peace in the midst of tumult, attend to the voice of experience, and mark in time the footsteps of disappointment; or life will be lost in desultory wishes, and death arrive before the dawn of wisdom.

In a sequestered valley, surrounded by rocky mountains that intercepted many of the passing clouds, though sunbeams variegated their ample sides, lived a sage, to whom nature had unlocked

H 2

her

her most hidden secrets. His hollow eyes, sunk in their orbits, retired from the view of vulgar objects, and turned inwards, overleaped the boundary prescribed to human knowledge. Intense thinking during fourscore and ten years, had whitened the scattered locks on his head, which, like the summit of the distant mountain, appeared to be bound by an eternal frost.

On the sandy waste behind the mountains, the track of ferocious beasts might be traced, and sometimes the mangled limbs which they left, attracted a hovering flight of birds of prey. An extensive wood the sage had forced to rear its head in a soil by no means congenial, and the firm trunks of the trees seemed to frown with defiance on time; though the spoils of innumerable summers covered the roots, which resembled fangs;

fangs ; so closely did they cling to the unfriendly sand, where serpents hissed, and snakes, rolling out their vast folds, inhaled the noxious vapours. The ravens and owls who inhabited the solitude, gave also a thicker gloom to the everlasting twilight, and the croaking of the former a monotony, in unison with the gloom ; whilst lions and tygers, shunning even this faint semblance of day, sought the dark caverns, and at night, when they shook off sleep, their roaring would make the whole valley resound, confounded with the screechings of the bird of night.

One mountain rose sublime, towering above all, on the craggy sides of which a few sea-weeds grew, washed by the ocean, that with tumultuous roar rushed to assault, and even undermine, the huge barrier that stopped its progress ;

H. 3

and

on it, are confined to purify themselves from the dross contracted in their first stage of existence; and it flowed in black waves, for ever bubbling along the cave, the extent of which had never been explored. From the sides and top, water distilled, and, petrifying as it fell, took fantastic shapes, that soon divided it into apartments, if so they might be called. In the foam, a wearied spirit would sometimes rise, to catch the most distant glimpse of light, or taste the vagrant breeze, which the yawning of the rock admitted, when Sagestus, for that was the name of the hoary sage, entered. Some, who were refined and almost cleared from vicious spots, he would allow to leave, for a limited time, their dark prison-house; and, flying on the winds across the bleak northern ocean, or rising in an exhalation

tion

tion till they reached a sun-beam, they thus re-visited the haunts of men. These were the guardian angels, who in soft whispers restrain the vicious, and animate the wavering wretch who stands suspended between virtue and vice.

Sagestus had spent a night in the cavern, as he often did, and he left the silent vestibule of the grave, just as the sun, emerging from the ocean, dispersed the clouds, which were not half so dense as those he had left. All that was human in him rejoiced at the sight of reviving life, and he viewed with pleasure the mounting sap rising to expand the herbs, which grew spontaneously in this wild—when, turning his eyes towards the sea, he found that death had been at work during his absence, and terrific marks of a furious storm still spread horror around. Though

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the

the day was serene, and threw bright rays on eyes for ever shut, it dawned not for the wretches who hung pendent on the craggy rocks, or were stretched lifeless on the sand. Some, struggling, had dug themselves a grave; others had resigned their breath before the impetuous surge whirled them on shore. A few, in whom the vital spark was not so soon dislodged, had clung to loose fragments; it was the grasp of death; embracing the stone, they stiffened; and the head, no longer erect, rested on the mass which the arms encircled. It felt not the agonizing gripe, nor heard the sigh that broke the heart in twain.

Resting his chin on an oaken club, the sage looked on every side, to see if he could discern any who yet breathed. He drew nearer, and thought he saw,

saw, at the first glance, the unclosed eyes glare; but soon perceived that they were a mere glassy substance, mute as the tongue; the jaws were fallen, and, in some of the tangled locks, hands were clinched; nay, even the nails had entered sharpened by despair. The blood flew rapidly to his heart; it was flesh; he felt he was still a man, and the big tear paced down his iron cheeks, whose muscles had not for a long time been relaxed by such humane emotions. A moment he breathed quick, then heaved a sigh, and his wonted calm returned with an unaccustomed glow of tenderness; for the ways of heaven were not hid from him; he lifted up his eyes to the common Father of nature, and all was as still in his bosom, as the smooth deep, after having closed

over

over the huge vessel from which the wretches had fled.

Turning round a part of the rock that jutted out, meditating on the ways of Providence, a weak infantine voice reached his ears; it was lisping out the name of mother. He looked, and beheld a blooming child leaning over, and kissing with eager fondness, lips that were insensible to the warm pressure. Starting at the sight of the sage, she fixed her eyes on him, "Wake her, ah! wake her," she cried, "or the sea will catch us." Again he felt compassion, for he saw that the mother slept the sleep of death. He stretched out his hand, and, smoothing his brow, invited her to approach; but she still intreated him to wake her mother, whom she continued to call, with an impatient tremulous voice. To detach
her

her from the body by persuasion would not have been very easy. Sagestus had a quicker method to effect his purpose ; he took out a box which contained a soporific powder, and as soon as the fumes reached her brain, the powers of life were suspended.

He carried her directly to his hut, and left her sleeping profoundly on his rushy couch.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

AGAIN Sagestus approached the dead, to view them with a more scrutinizing eye. He was perfectly acquainted with the construction of the human body, knew the traces that virtue or vice leaves on the whole frame; they were now indelibly fixed by death; nay more, he knew by the shape of the solid structure, how far the spirit could range, and saw the barrier beyond which it could not pass: the mazes of fancy he explored, measured the stretch of thought, and, weighing all in an even balance, could tell whom nature had stamped an hero, a poet, or philosopher.

By

By their appearance, at a transient glance, he knew that the vessel must have contained many passengers, and that some of them were above the vulgar, with respect to fortune and education; he then walked leisurely among the dead, and narrowly observed their pallid features.

His eye first rested on a form in which proportion reigned, and, stroking back the hair, a spacious forehead met his view; warm fancy had revelled there, and her airy dance had left vestiges, scarcely visible to a mortal eye. Some perpendicular lines pointed out that melancholy had predominated in his constitution; yet the straggling hairs of his eye-brows showed that anger had often shook his frame; indeed, the four temperatures, like the four elements, had resided in this little world,
and

and produced harmony. The whole visage was bony, and an energetic frown had knit the flexible skin of his brow ; the kingdom within had been extensive ; and the wild creations of fancy had there “ a local habitation and a name.” So exquisite was his sensibility, so quick his comprehension, that he perceived various combinations in an instant ; he caught truth as she darted towards him, saw all her fair proportion at a glance, and the flash of his eye spoke the quick senses which conveyed intelligence to his mind ; the sensorium indeed was capacious, and the sage imagined he saw the lucid beam, sparkling with love or ambition, in characters of fire, which a graceful curve of the upper eyelid shaded. The lips were a little deranged by contempt ; and a mixture of vanity and self-

self-complacency formed a few irregular lines round them. The chin had suffered from sensuality, yet there were still great marks of vigour in it, as it advanced with stern dignity. The hand accustomed to command, and even tyrannize, was unnerved; but its appearance convinced Sagestus, that he had oftener wielded a thought than a weapon; and that he had silenced, by irresistible conviction, the superficial disputant, and the being, who doubted because he had not strength to believe, who, wavering between different borrowed opinions, first caught at one straw, then at another, unable to settle into any consistency of character. After gazing a few moments, Sagestus turned away exclaiming, How are the stately oaks torn up by a tempest, and the bow

Vol. IV.

I

unstrung

unstrung, that could force the arrow beyond the ken of the eye !

What a different face next met his view ! The forehead was short, yet well set together ; the nose small, but a little turned up at the end ; and a draw-down at the sides of his mouth, proved that he had been a humourist, who minded the main chance, and could joke with his acquaintance, while he eagerly devoured a dainty which he was not to pay for. His lips shut like a box whose hinges had often been mended ; and the muscles, which display the soft emotion of the heart on the cheeks, were grown quite rigid, so that, the vessels that should have moistened them not having much communication with the grand source of passions, the fine volatile fluid had evaporated, and they became mere dry fibres, which might
be

be pulled by any misfortune that threatened himself, but were not sufficiently elastic to be moved by the miseries of others. His joints were inserted compactly, and with celerity they had performed all the animal functions, without any of the grace which results from the imagination mixing with the senses.

A huge form was stretched near him; that exhibited marks of overgrown infancy; every part was relaxed; all appeared imperfect. Yet, some undulating lines on the puffed-out cheeks, displayed signs of timid, servile good nature; and the skin of the forehead had been so often drawn up by wonder, that the few hairs of the eyebrows were fixed in a sharp arch, whilst an ample chin rested in lobes of flesh on his protuberant breast.

By his side was a body that had scarcely ever much life in it—sympathy seemed to have drawn them together—every feature and limb was round and fleshy, and, if a kind of brutal cunning had not marked the face, it might have been mistaken for an automaton, so unmixed was the phlegmatic fluid. The vital spark was buried deep in a soft mass of matter, resembling the pith in young elder, which, when found, is so equivocal, that it only appears a moister part of the same body.

Another part of the beach was covered with sailors, whose bodies exhibited marks of strength and brutal courage.—Their characters were all different, though of the same class; Sagestus did not stay to discriminate them, satisfied with a rough sketch. He saw indolence roused by a love of humour,

humour, or rather bodily fun ; sensuality and prodigality with a vein of generosity running through it ; a contempt of danger with gross superstition ; supine senses, only to be kept alive by noisy, tumultuous pleasures, or that kind of novelty which borders on absurdity : this formed the common outline, and the rest were rather dabs than shades.

Sagestus paused, and remembered it had been said by an earthly wit, that “ many a flower is born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air.” How little, he exclaimed, did that poet know of the ways of heaven ! And yet, in this respect, they are direct ; the hands before me, were designed to pull a rope, knock down a sheep, or perform the servile offices of life ; no “ mute, inglorious poet ” rests

I 3

amongst

amongst them, and he who is superior to his fellow, does not rise above mediocrity. The genius that sprouts from a dunghil soon shakes off the heterogeneous mass; those only grovel, who have not power to fly.

He turned his step towards the mother of the orphan: another female was at some distance; and a man who, by his garb, might have been the husband, or brother, of the former, was not far off.

Him the sage surveyed with an attentive eye, and bowed with respect to the inanimate clay, that lately had been the dwelling of a most benevolent spirit. The head was square, though the features were not very prominent; but there was a great harmony in every part, and the turn of the nostrils and lips evinced, that the soul must have
had

had taste, to which they had served as organs. Penetration and judgment were seated on the brows that overhung the eye. Fixed as it was, Sagestus quickly discerned the expression it must have had; dark and pensive, rather from slowness of comprehension than melancholy, it seemed to absorb the light of knowledge, to drink it in ray by ray; nay, a new one was not allowed to enter his head till the last was arranged: an opinion was thus cautiously received, and maturely weighed, before it was added to the general stock. As nature led him to mount from a part to the whole, he was most conversant with the beautiful, and rarely comprehended the sublime; yet, said Sagestus, with a softened tone, he was all heart, full of forbearance, and desirous to please every fellow-creature;

but from a nobler motive than a love of admiration; the fumes of vanity never mounted to cloud his brain, or tarnish his beneficence. The fluid in which those placid eyes swam, is now congealed; how often has tenderness given them the finest water! Some torn parts of the child's dress hung round his arm, which led the sage to conclude, that he had saved the child; every line in his face confirmed the conjecture; benevolence indeed strung the nerves that naturally were not very firm; it was the great knot that tied together the scattered qualities, and gave the distinct stamp to the character.

The female whom he next approached, and supposed to be an attendant on the other, was below the middle size, and her legs were so disproportionably

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short,

short; that, when she moved, she must have waddled along; her elbows were drawn in to touch her long taper, waist, and the air of her whole body was an affectation of gentility. Death could not alter the rigid hang of her limbs, or efface the simper that had stretched her mouth; the lips were thin, as if nature intended she should mince her words; her nose was small, and sharp at the end; and the forehead, unmarked by eyebrows, was wrinkled by the discontent that had sunk her cheeks, on which Sagestus still discerned faint traces of tenderness; and fierce good-nature, he perceived had sometimes animated the little spark of an eye that anger had oftener lighted. The same thought occurred to him that the sight of the sailors had suggested, Men and women are all in their proper places—
this

this female was intended to fold up linen and nurse the sick.

Anxious to observe the mother of his charge, he turned to the lily that had been so rudely snapped, and, carefully observing it, traced every fine line to its source. There was a delicacy in her form, so truly feminine, that an involuntary desire to cherish such a being, made the sage again feel the almost forgotten sensations of his nature. On observing her more closely, he discovered that her natural delicacy had been increased by an improper education, to a degree that took away all vigour from her faculties. And its baneful influence had had such an effect on her mind, that few traces of the exertions of it appeared on her face, though the fine finish of her features, and particularly the form of the forehead, con-

vinced the sage that her understanding might have risen considerably above mediocrity, had the wheels ever been put in motion; but, clogged by prejudices, they never turned quite round, and, whenever she considered a subject, she stopped before she came to a conclusion. Assuming a mask of propriety, she had banished nature; yet its tendency was only to be diverted, not stifled. Some lines, which took from the symmetry of the mouth, not very obvious to a superficial observer, struck Sagestus, and they appeared to him characters of indolent obstinacy. Not having courage to form an opinion of her own, she adhered, with blind partiality, to those she adopted, which she received in the lump, and, as they always remained unopened, of course she only saw the even gloss on the outside.

side. Vestiges of anger were visible on her brow, and the sage concluded, that she had often been offended with, and indeed would scarcely make any allowance for, those who did not coincide with her in opinion, as things always appear self-evident that have never been examined ; yet her very weakness gave a charming timidity to her countenance ; goodness and tenderness pervaded every lineament, and melted in her dark blue eyes. The compassion that wanted activity, was sincere, though it only embellished her face, or produced casual acts of charity when a moderate alms could relieve present distress. Unacquainted with life, fictitious, unnatural distress drew the tears that were not shed for real misery. In its own shape, human wretchedness excites a little disgust in the mind that
has

has indulged sickly refinement. Perhaps the sage gave way to a little conjecture in drawing the last conclusion ; but his conjectures generally arose from distinct ideas, and a dawn of light allowed him to see a great way farther than common mortals.

He was now convinced that the orphan was not very unfortunate in having lost such a mother. The parent that inspires fond affection without respect, is seldom an useful one ; and they only are respectable, who consider right and wrong abstracted from local forms and accidental modifications.

Determined to adopt the child, he named it after himself, Sagesta, and retired to the hut where the innocent slept, to think of the best method of educating this child, whom the angry deep had spared.

[The

[The last branch of the education of Sagesta, consisted of a variety of characters and stories presented to her in the Cave of Fancy, of which the following is a specimen.]

CHAP.

CHAP.

A FORM now approached that particularly struck and interested Sagesta. The sage, observing what passed in her mind, bade her ever trust to the first impression. In life, he continued, try to remember the effect the first appearance of a stranger has on your mind; and, in proportion to your sensibility, you may decide on the character. Intelligence glances from eyes that have the same pursuits, and a benevolent heart soon traces the marks of benevolence on the countenance of an unknown fellow-creature; and not only the countenance, but the gestures, the
voice,

voice, loudly speak truth to the unprejudiced mind.

Whenever a stranger advances towards you with a tripping step, receives you with broad smiles, and a profusion of compliments, and yet you find yourself embarrassed and unable to return the salutation with equal cordiality, be assured that such a person is affected, and endeavours to maintain a very good character in the eyes of the world, without really practising the social virtues which dress the face in looks of unfeigned complacency. Kindred minds are drawn to each other by expressions which elude description; and, like the calm breeze that plays on a smooth lake, they are rather felt than seen. Beware of a man who always appears in good humour; a selfish design too frequently lurks in the smiles the heart
never

never curved ; or there is an affectation of candour that destroys all strength of character, by blending truth and falsehood into an unmeaning mass. The mouth, in fact, seems to be the feature where you may trace every kind of dissimulation, from the simper of vanity, to the fixed smile of the designing villain. Perhaps, the modulations of the voice will still more quickly give a key to the character than even the turns of the mouth, or the words that issue from it ; often do the tones of unpractised dissemblers give the lie to their assertions. Many people never speak in an unnatural voice, but when they are insincere : the phrases not corresponding with the dictates of the heart, have nothing to keep them in tune. In the course of an argument however, you may easily discover whether vanity or conviction

stimulates the disputant, though his inflated countenance may be turned from you, and you may not see the gestures which mark self-sufficiency. He stopped, and the spirit began.

I have wandered through the cave ; and, as soon as I have taught you a useful lesson, I shall take my flight where my tears will cease to flow, and where mine eyes will no more be shocked with the sight of guilt and sorrow. Before many moons have changed, thou wilt enter, O mortal ! into that world I have lately left. Listen to my warning voice, and trust not too much to the goodness which I perceive resides in thy breast. Let it be reined in by principles, lest thy very virtue sharpen the sting of remorse, which as naturally follows disorder in the moral world, as pain attends on intemperance in the physical.

physical. But my history will afford you more instruction than mere advice. Suggestus concurred in opinion with her, observing that the senses of children should be the first object of improvement; then their passions worked on; and judgment the fruit, must be the acquirement of the being itself, when out of leading-strings. The spirit bowed assent, and, without any further prelude, entered on her history.

My mother was a most respectable character, but she was yoked to a man whose follies and vices made her ever feel the weight of her chains. The first sensation I recollect, was pity; for I have seen her weep over me and the rest of her babes, lamenting that the extravagance of a father would throw us destitute on the world. But, though my father was extravagant, and seldom

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thought

thought of any thing but his own pleasures, our education was not neglected. In solitude, this employment was my mother's only solace; and my father's pride made him procure us masters; nay, sometimes he was so gratified by our improvement, that he would embrace us with tenderness, and intreat my mother to forgive him, with marks of real contrition. But the affection his penitence gave rise to, only served to expose her to continual disappointments, and keep hope alive merely to torment her. After a violent debauch he would let his beard grow, and the sadness that reigned in the house I shall never forget; he was ashamed to meet even the eyes of his children. This is so contrary to the nature of things, it gave me exquisite pain; I used, at those times, to show him extreme respect. I
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could

could not bear to see my parent humble himself before me. However neither his constitution, nor fortune could long bear the constant waste. He had, I have observed, a childish affection for his children, which was displayed in caresses that gratified him for the moment, yet never restrained the headlong fury of his appetites ; his momentary repentance wrung his heart, without influencing his conduct ; and he died, leaving an encumbered wreck of a good estate.

As we had always lived in splendid poverty, rather than in affluence, the shock was not so great ; and my mother repressed her anguish, and concealed some circumstances, that she might not shed a destructive mildew over the gaiety of youth.

So fondly did I doat on this dear pa-

K 3

rent,

rent, that she engrossed all my tenderness; her sorrows had knit me firmly to her, and my chief care was to give her proofs of affection. The gallantry that afforded my companions, the few young people my mother forced me to mix with, so much pleasure, I despised; I wished more to be loved than admired, for I could love. I adored virtue; and my imagination, chasing a chimerical object, overlooked the common pleasures of life; they were not sufficient for my happiness. A latent fire made me burn to rise superior to my contemporaries in wisdom and virtue; and tears of joy and emulation filled my eyes when I read an account of a great action—I felt admiration, not astonishment.

My mother had two particular friends, who endeavoured to settle her affairs; one was a middle-aged man, a merchant;

chant; the human breast never enshrined a more benevolent heart. His manners were rather rough, and he bluntly spoke his thoughts without observing the pain it gave; yet he possessed extreme tenderness, as far as his discernment went. Men do not make sufficient distinction, said she, digressing from her story to address Sagestus, between tenderness and sensibility.

To give the shortest definition of sensibility, replied the sage, I should say that it is the result of acute senses, finely fashioned nerves, which vibrate at the slightest touch, and convey such clear intelligence to the brain, that it does not require to be arranged by the judgment. Such persons instantly enter into the characters of others, and instinctively discern what will give pain to every human being; their own feelings are

so varied that they seem to contain in themselves, not only all the passions of the species, but their various modifications. Exquisite pain^{and} pleasure is their portion ; nature wears for them a different aspect than is displayed to common mortals. One moment it is a paradise ; all is beautiful : a cloud arises, an emotion receives a sudden damp ; darkness invades the sky, and the world is an unweeded garden ;—but go on with your narrative, said Sagestus, recollecting himself.

She proceeded. The man I am describing was humanity itself ; but frequently he did not understand me ; many of my feelings were not to be analyzed by his common sense. His friendships, for he had many friends, gave him pleasure unmingled with pain ; his religion was coldly reasonable, because he want-
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ed fancy, and he did not feel the necessity of finding, or creating, a perfect object, to answer the one engraved on his heart: the sketch there was faint. He went with the stream, and rather caught a character from the society he lived in, than spread one around him. In my mind many opinions were graven with a pen of brass, which he thought chimerical: but time could not erase them, and I now recognize them as the seeds of eternal happiness: they will soon expand in those realms where I shall enjoy the bliss adapted to my nature; this is all we need ask of the Supreme Being; happiness must follow the completion of his designs. He however could live quietly, without giving a preponderancy to many important opinions that continually obtruded on my mind; not having an enthusiastic

thusfrastic affection for his fellow creatures, he did them good, without suffering from their follies. He was particularly attached to me, and I felt for him all the affection of a daughter; often, when he had been interesting himself to promote my welfare, have I lamented that he was not my father; lamented that the vices of mine had dried up one source of pure affection.

The other friend I have already alluded to, was of a very different character; greatness of mind, and those combinations of feeling which are so difficult to describe, raised him above the throng; that bustle their hour out, lie down to sleep, and are forgotten. But I shall soon see him, she exclaimed, as much superior to his former self, as he then rose in my eyes above his fellow creatures! As she spoke, a glow
of

of delight animated each feature; her countenance appeared transparent; and she silently anticipated the happiness she should enjoy, when she entered those mansions, where death-divided friends should meet, to part no more; where human weakness could not damp their bliss, or poison the cup of joy that, on earth, drops from the lips as soon as tasted, or, if some daring mortal snatches a hasty draught, what was sweet to the taste becomes a root of bitterness.

He was unfortunate, had many cares to struggle with, and I marked on his cheeks traces of the same sorrows that sunk my own. He was unhappy I say, and perhaps pity might first have awoke my tenderness; for, early in life, an artful woman worked on his compassionate soul, and he united his fate to a being made up of such jarring elements,

ments, that he was still alone. The discovery did not extinguish that propensity to love, a high sense of virtue fed. I saw him sick and unhappy, without a friend to sooth the hours languor made heavy ; often did I sit a long winter's evening by his side, railing at the swift wings of time, and terming my love, humanity.

Two years passed in this manner, silently rooting my affection; and it might have continued calm, if a fever had not brought him to the very verge of the grave. Though still deceived, I was miserable that the customs of the world did not allow me to watch by him ; when sleep forsook his pillow, my wearied eyes were not closed, and my anxious spirit hovered round his bed. I saw him, before he had recovered his strength ; and, when his hand touched mine,

mine, life almost retired, or flew to meet the touch. The first look found a ready way to my heart, and thrilled through every vein. We were left alone, and insensibly began to talk of the immortality of the soul; I declared that I could not live without this conviction. In the ardour of conversation he pressed my hand to his heart; it rested there a moment, and my emotions gave weight to my opinion, for the affection we felt was not of a perishable nature.—A silence ensued, I know not how long; he then threw my hand from him, as if it had been a serpent; formally complained of the weather, and adverted to twenty other uninteresting subjects. Vain efforts! Our hearts had already spoken to each other.

Feebly did I afterwards combat an
affection,

affection, which seemed twisted in every fibre of my heart. The world stood still when I thought of him ; it moved heavily at best, with one whose very constitution seemed to mark her out for misery. But I will not dwell on the passion I too fondly nursed. One only refuge had I on earth ; I could not resolutely desolate the scene my fancy flew to, when worldly cares, when a knowledge of mankind, which my circumstances forced on me, rendered every other insipid. I was afraid of the unmarked vacuity of common life ; yet, though I supinely indulged myself in fairy-land, when I ought to have been more actively employed, virtue was still the first mover of my actions ; she dressed my love in such enchanting colours, and spread the net I could never break. Our corresponding feelings confounded
our

our very souls ; and in many conversations we almost intuitively discerned each other's sentiments ; the heart opened itself, not chilled by reserve, nor afraid of misconstruction. But, if virtue inspired love, love gave new energy to virtue, and absorbed every selfish passion. Never did even a wish escape me, that my lover should not fulfil the hard duties which fate had imposed on him. I only dissembled with him in one particular ; I endeavoured to soften his wife's too conspicuous follies, and extenuated her failings in an indirect manner. To this I was prompted by a loftiness of spirit ; I should have broken the band of life, had I ceased to respect myself. But I will hasten to an important change in my circumstances.

My mother, who had concealed the real state of her affairs from me, was
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now impelled to make me her confidant, that I might assist to discharge her mighty debt of gratitude. The merchant, my more than father, had privately assisted her: but a fatal civil-war reduced his large property to a bare competency; and an inflammation in his eyes, that arose from a cold he had caught at a wreck, which he watched during a stormy night to keep off the lawless colliers, almost deprived him of sight. His life had been spent in society, and he scarcely knew how to fill the void; for his spirit would not allow him to mix with his former equals as an humble companion; he who had been treated with uncommon respect, could not brook their insulting pity. From the resource of solitude, reading, the complaint in his eyes cut

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him off, and he became our constant visitor.

Actuated by the sincerest affection, I used to read to him, and he mistook my tenderness for love. How could I undeceive him, when every circumstance frowned on him! Too soon I found that I was his only comfort; I, who rejected his hand when fortune smiled, could not now second her blow; and, in a moment of enthusiastic gratitude and tender compassion, I offered him my hand.—It was received with pleasure; transport was not made for his soul; nor did he discover that nature had separated us, by making me alive to such different sensations. My mother was to live with us, and I dwelt on this circumstance to banish cruel recollections, when the bent bow returned to its former state.

VOL. IV.

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With

With a bursting heart and a firm voice, I named the day when I was to seal my promise. It came, in spite of my regret ; I had been previously preparing myself for the awful ceremony, and answered the solemn question with a resolute tone, that would silence the dictates of my heart ; it was a forced, unvaried one ; had nature modulated it, my secret would have escaped. My active spirit was painfully on the watch to repress every tender emotion. The joy in my venerable parent's countenance, the tenderness of my husband, as he conducted me home, for I really had a sincere affection for him, the gratulations of my mind, when I thought that this sacrifice was heroic, all tended to deceive me ; but the joy of victory over the resigned, pallid look of my lover, haunted my imagination, and fixed

fixed itself in the centre of my brain.— Still I imagined, that his spirit was near me, that he only felt sorrow for my loss, and without complaint resigned me to my duty.

I was left alone a moment ; my two elbows rested on a table to support my chin. Ten thousand thoughts darted with astonishing velocity through my mind. My eyes were dry ; I was on the brink of madness. At this moment a strange association was made by my imagination ; I thought of Gallileo, who when he left the inquisition, looked upwards, and cried out, “ Yet it moves.” A shower of tears, like the refreshing drops of heaven, relieved my parched sockets ; they fell disregarded on the table ; and, stamping with my foot, in an agony I exclaimed, “ Yet I love.” My husband entered before I had calmed

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these

these tumultuous emotions, and tenderly took my hand. I snatched it from him; grief and surprise were marked on his countenance; I hastily stretched it out again. My heart smote me, and I removed the transient mist by an unfeigned endeavour to please him.

A few months after, my mind grew calmer; and, if a treacherous imagination, if feelings many accidents revived, sometimes plunged me into melancholy, I often repeated with steady conviction, that virtue was not an empty name, and that, in following the dictates of duty, I had not bidden adieu to content.

In the course of a few years, the dear object of my fondest affection, said farewell, in dying accents. Thus left alone, my grief became dear; and I did not feel solitary, because I thought

I might,

I might, without a crime, indulge a passion, that grew more ardent than ever when my imagination only presented him to my view, and restored my former activity of soul which the late calm had rendered torpid. I seemed to find myself again, to find the eccentric warmth that gave me identity of character. Reason had governed my conduct, but could not change my nature; this voluptuous sorrow was superior to every gratification of sense, and death more firmly united our hearts.

Alive to every human affection, I smoothed my mother's passage to eternity, and so often gave my husband sincere proofs of affection, he never supposed that I was actuated by a more fervent attachment. My melancholy, my uneven spirits, he attributed to my extreme sensibility, and loved me the

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better.

better for possessing qualities he could not comprehend.

At the close of a summer's day, some years after, I wandered with careless steps over a pathless common; various anxieties had rendered the hours which the sun had enlightened heavy; sober evening came on; I wished to still "my mind, and woo lone quiet in her silent walk." The scene accorded with my feelings; it was wild and grand; and the spreading twilight had almost confounded the distant sea with the barren, blue hills that melted from my sight. I sat down on a rising ground; the rays of the departing sun illumined the horizon, but so indistinctly, that I anticipated their total extinction. The death of Nature led me to a still more interesting subject, that came home to my bosom, the death of him I loved.

A village-

A village-bell was tolling ; I listened, and thought of the moment when I heard his interrupted breath, and felt the agonizing fear, that the same sound would never more reach my ears, and that the intelligence glanced from my eyes, would no more be felt. The spoiler had seized his prey ; the sun was fled, what was this world to me ! I wandered to another, where death and darkness could not enter ; I pursued the sun beyond the mountains, and the soul escaped from this vale of tears. My reflections were tinged with melancholy, but they were sublime.— I gasped a mighty whole, and smiled on the king of terrors ; the tie which bound me to my friends he could not break ; the same mysterious knot united me to the source of all goodness and happiness. I had seen the divinity re-

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flected

flected in a face I loved; I had read immortal characters displayed on a human countenance, and forgot myself whilst I gazed. I could not think of immortality, without recollecting the ecstasy I felt, when my heart first whispered to me that I was beloved; and again did I feel the sacred tie of mutual affection; fervently I prayed to the father of mercies; and rejoiced that he could see every turn of a heart, whose movements I could not perfectly understand. My passion seemed a pledge of immortality; I did not wish to hide it from the all-searching eye of heaven. Where indeed could I go from his presence? and, whilst it was dear to me, though darkness might reign during the night of life, joy would come when I awoke to life everlasting.

I now turned my step towards home,
when

when the appearance of a girl, who stood weeping on the common, attracted my attention. I accosted her, and soon heard her simple tale; that her father was gone to sea, and her mother sick in bed. I followed her to their little dwelling, and relieved the sick wretch. I then again sought my own abode; but death did not now haunt my fancy. Contriving to give the poor creature I had left more effectual relief, I reached my own garden-gate very weary, and rested on it.—Recollecting the turns of my mind during the walk, I exclaimed, Surely life may thus be enlivened by active benevolence, and the sleep of death, like that I am now disposed to fall into, may be sweet!

My life was now unmarked by any extraordinary change, and a few days

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ago

ago I entered this cavern ; for through it every mortal must pass; and here I have discovered, that I neglected many opportunities of being useful, whilst I fostered a devouring flame. Remorse has not reached me, because I firmly adhered to my principles, and I have also discovered that I saw through a false medium. Worthy as the mortal was I adored, I should not long have loved him with the ardour I did, had fate united us, and broken the delusion the imagination so artfully wove. His virtues, as they now do, would have extorted my esteem; but he who formed the human soul, only can fill it, and the chief happiness of an immortal being must arise from the same source as its existence. Earthly love leads to heavenly, and prepares us for a more ex-

alted state; if it does not change its nature, and destroy itself, by trampling on the virtue, that constitutes its essence, and allies us to the Deity.

ON

POETRY,

AND

OUR RELISH FOR THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE.

ON
P O E T R Y, &c.

A TASTE for rural scenes, in the present state of society, appears to be very often an artificial sentiment, rather inspired by poetry and romances, than a real perception of the beauties of nature. But, as it is reckoned a proof of refined taste to praise the calm pleasures which the country affords, the theme is never exhausted. Yet it may be made a question, whether this romantic

mantic kind of declamation, has much effect on the conduct of those, who leave, for a season, the crowded cities in which they were bred.

I have been led to these reflections, by observing, when I have resided for any length of time in the country, how few people seem to contemplate nature with their own eyes. I have "brushed the dew away" in the morning; but, pacing over the printless grass, I have wondered that, in such delightful situations, the sun was allowed to rise in solitary majesty, whilst my eyes alone hailed its beautifying beams. The webs of the evening have still been spread across the hedged path, unless some labouring man, trudging to work, disturbed the fairy structure; yet, in spite of this supineness, when I joined
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the social circle, every tongue rang changes on the pleasures of the country,

Having frequently had occasion to make the same observation, I was led to endeavour, in one of my solitary rambles, to trace the cause, and likewise to enquire why the poetry written in the infancy of society, is most natural: which, strictly speaking (for *natural* is a very indefinite expression) is merely to say, that it is the transcript of immediate sensations, in all their native wildness and simplicity, when fancy, awakened by the sight of interesting objects, was most actively at work. At such moments, sensibility quickly furnishes similes, and the sublimated spirits combine images, which rising spontaneously, it is not necessary coldly to ransack the understanding or memory, till the laborious efforts of judg-

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ment exclude present sensations, and damp the fire of enthusiasm.

The effusions of a vigorous mind, will ever tell us how far the understanding has been enlarged by thought, and stored with knowledge. The richness of the soil even appears on the surface; and the result of profound thinking, often mixing, with playful grace, in the reveries of the poet, smoothly incorporates with the ebullitions of animal spirits, when the finely fashioned nerve vibrates acutely with rapture, or when, relaxed by soft melancholy, a pleasing languor prompts the long-drawn sigh, and feeds the slowly falling tear.

The poet, the man of strong feelings, gives us only an image of his mind, when he was actually alone, conversing with himself, and marking the impression which nature had made on his
own

own heart.—If, at this sacred moment, the idea of some departed friend, some tender recollection when the soul was most alive to tenderness, intruded un-awares into his thoughts, the sorrow which it produced is artlessly, yet poetically expressed—and who can avoid sympathizing?

Love to man leads to devotion—grand and sublime images strike the imagination—God is seen in every floating cloud, and comes from the misty mountain to receive the noblest homage of an intelligent creature—praise. How solemn is the moment, when all affections and remembrances fade before the sublime admiration which the wisdom and goodness of God inspires, when he is worshipped in a *temple not made with hands*, and the world seems to contain only the mind

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that formed, and the mind that contemplates it ! These are not the weak responses of ceremonial devotion ; nor, to express them, would the poet need another poet's aid : his heart burns within him, and he speaks the language of truth and nature with resistless energy.

Inequalities, of course, are observable in his effusions ; and a less vigorous fancy, with more taste, would have produced more elegance and uniformity ; but, as passages are softened or expunged during the cooler moments of reflection, the understanding is gratified at the expence of those involuntary sensations, which, like the beauteous tints of an evening sky, are so evanescent, that they melt into new forms before they can be analyzed. For however eloquently we may boast of
our

our reason, man must often be delighted he cannot tell why, or his blunt feelings are not made to relish the beauties which nature, poetry, or any of the imitative arts, afford.

The imagery of the ancients seems naturally to have been borrowed from surrounding objects and their mythology. When a hero is to be transported from one place to another, across pathless wastes, is any vehicle so natural, as one of the fleecy clouds on which the poet has often gazed, scarcely conscious that he wished to make it his chariot? Again, when nature seems to present obstacles to his progress at almost every step, when the tangled forest and steep mountain stand as barriers, to pass over which the mind longs for supernatural aid; an interposing deity, who walks on the waves,

M 3

and

and rules the storm, severely felt in the first attempts to cultivate a country, will receive from the impassioned fancy "a local habitation and a name."

It would be a philosophical enquiry, and throw some light on the history of the human mind, to trace, as far as our information will allow us to trace, the spontaneous feelings and ideas which have produced the images that now frequently appear unnatural, because they are remote; and disgusting, because they have been servilely copied by poets, whose habits of thinking, and views of nature must have been different; for, though the understanding seldom disturbs the current of our present feelings, without dissipating the gay clouds which fancy has been embracing, yet it silently gives the colour to the whole tenour of them, and the dream.

dream is over, when truth is grossly violated, or images introduced, selected from books, and not from local manners or popular prejudices.

In a more advanced state of civilization, a poet is rather the creature of art, than of nature. The books that he reads in his youth, become a hot-bed in which artificial fruits are produced, beautiful to the common eye, though they want the true hue and flavour. His images do not arise from sensations; they are copies; and, like the works of the painters who copy ancient statues when they draw men and women of their own times, we acknowledge that the features are fine, and the proportions just; yet they are men of stone; insipid figures, that never convey to the mind the idea of a portrait taken from life, where the soul gives

M. 4. spirit.

spirit and homogeneity to the whole. The filken wings of fancy are shrivelled by rules; and a desire of attaining elegance of diction, occasions an attention to words, incompatible with sublime, impassioned thoughts.

A boy of abilities, who has been taught the structure of verse at school, and been roused by emulation to compose rhymes whilst he was reading works of genius, may, by practice, produce pretty verses, and even become what is often termed an elegant poet: yet his readers, without knowing what to find fault with, do not find themselves warmly interested. In the works of the poets who fasten on their affections, they see grosser faults, and the very images which shock their taste in the modern; still they do not appear as puerile or extrinsic in one as the other.—

other.—Why?—because they did not appear so to the author.

It may sound paradoxical, after observing that those productions want vigour, that are merely the work of imitation, in which the understanding has violently directed, if not extinguished, the blaze of fancy, to assert, that, though genius be only another word for exquisite sensibility, the first observers of nature, the true poets, exercised their understanding much more than their imitators. But they exercised it to discriminate things, whilst their followers were busy to borrow sentiments and arrange words.

Boys who have received a classical education, load their memory with words, and the correspondent ideas are perhaps never distinctly comprehended. As a proof of this assertion,
I must

I must observe, that I have known many young people who could write tolerably smooth verses, and string epithets prettily together, when their prose themes showed the barrenness of their minds, and how superficial the cultivation must have been, which their understanding had received.

Dr. Johnson, I know, has given a definition of genius, which would overturn my reasoning, if I were to admit it.—He imagines, that *a strong mind, accidentally led to some particular study* in which it excels, is a genius.—Not to stop to investigate the causes which produced this happy *strength* of mind, experience seems to prove, that those minds have appeared most vigorous, that have pursued a study, after nature had discovered a bent; for it would be absurd to suppose, that a slight impression

sion made on the weak faculties of a boy, is the fiat of fate, and not to be effaced by any succeeding impression, or unexpected difficulty. Dr. Johnson in fact, appears sometimes to be of the same opinion (how consistently I shall not now enquire), especially when he observes, "that Thomson looked on nature with the eye which she only gives to a poet."

But, though it should be allowed that books may produce some poets, I fear they will never be the poets who charm our cares to sleep, or extort admiration. They may diffuse taste, and polish the language; but I am inclined to conclude that they will seldom rouse the passions, or amend the heart.

And, to return to the first subject of discussion, the reason why most people are more interested by a scene described

ardour till he is mocked by a glimpse of unattainable excellence, appear to them the light vapours of a dreaming enthusiast, who gives up the substance for the shadow. It is not within that they seek amusement; their eyes are seldom turned on themselves; consequently their emotions, though sometimes fervid, are always transient, and the nicer perceptions which distinguish the man of genuine taste, are not felt, or make such a slight impression as scarcely to excite any pleasurable sensations. Is it surprising then that they are often overlooked, even by those who are delighted by the same images concentrated by the poet?

But even this numerous class is exceeded, by witlings, who, anxious to appear to have wit and taste, do not allow their understandings or feelings

ings any liberty ; for, instead of cultivating their faculties and reflecting on their operations, they are busy collecting prejudices ; and are predetermined to admire what the suffrage of time announces as excellent, not to store up a fund of amusement for themselves, but to enable them to talk.

These hints will assist the reader to trace some of the causes why the beauties of nature are not forcibly felt, when civilization, or rather luxury, has made considerable advances—those calm sensations are not sufficiently lively to serve as a relaxation to the voluptuary, or even to the moderate pursuer of artificial pleasures. In the present state of society, the understanding must bring back the feelings to nature, or the sensibility must have such native strength, as rather to be whetted than
* destroyed

destroyed by the strong exercises of passion.

That the most valuable things are liable to the greatest perversion, is however as trite as true :—for the same sensibility, or quickness of senses, which makes a man relish the tranquil scenes of nature, when sensation, rather than reason, imparts delight, frequently makes a libertine of him, by leading him to prefer the sensual tumult of love a little refined by sentiment, to the calm pleasures of affectionate friendship, in whose sober satisfactions, reason, mixing her tranquillizing convictions, whispers, that content, not happiness, is the reward of virtue in this world.

H I N T S.

[Chiefly designed to have been incorporated in the Second Part of the Vindication of the Rights of Woman.]

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H I N T S.

1.

INDOLENCE is the source of nervous complaints, and a whole host of cares. This devil might say that his name was legion.

2.

It should be one of the employments of women of fortune, to visit hospitals, and superintend the conduct of inferiors.

3.

It is generally supposed, that the imagination of women is particularly
N 2 active.

active, and leads them astray. Why then do we seek by education only to exercise their imagination and feeling, till the understanding, grown rigid by disuse, is unable to exercise itself—and the superfluous nourishment the imagination and feeling have received, renders the former romantic, and the latter weak?

4.

Few men have risen to any great eminence in learning, who have not received something like a regular education. Why are women expected to surmount difficulties that men are not equal to?

5.

Nothing can be more absurd than the ridicule of the critic, that the heroine of his mock-tragedy was in love with the very man whom she ought
least

least to have loved ; he could not have given a better reason: How can passion gain strength any other way? In Otaheite, love cannot be known, where the obstacles to irritate an indiscriminate appetite, and sublimate the simple sensations of desire till they mount to passion, are never known. There a man or woman cannot love the very person they ought not to have loved—nor does jealousy ever fan the flame.

6.

It has frequently been observed, that, when women have an object in view, they pursue it with more steadiness than men, particularly love. This is not a compliment. Passion pursues with more heat than reason, and with most ardour during the absence of reason.

7.

Men are more subject to the physical

N 3

love

love than women. The confined education of women makes them more subject to jealousy.

8.

Simplicity seems, in general, the consequence of ignorance, as I have observed in the characters of women and sailors—the being confined to one track of impressions.

9.

I know of no other way of preserving the chastity of mankind, than that of rendering women rather objects of love than desire. The difference is great. Yet, while women are encouraged to ornament their persons at the expence of their minds, while indolence renders them helpless and lascivious (for what other name can be given to the common intercourse between the sexes?) they will be, generally

rally speaking, only objects of desire; and, to such women, men cannot be constant. Men, accustomed only to have their senses moved, merely seek for a selfish gratification in the society of women, and their sexual instinct, being neither supported by the understanding nor the heart, must be excited by variety.

10.

We ought to respect old opinions; though prejudices, blindly adopted, lead to error, and preclude all exercise of the reason.

The emulation which often makes a boy mischievous, is a generous spur; and the old remark, that unlucky, turbulent boys, make the wisest and best men, is true, spite of Mr. Knox's arguments. It has been observed, that the most adventurous horses, when tamed

or domesticated, are the most mild and tractable.

11.

The children who start up suddenly at twelve or fourteen, and fall into decays, in consequence, as it is termed, of outgrowing their strength, are in general, I believe, those children, who have been bred up with mistaken tenderness, and not allowed to sport and take exercise in the open air. This is analogous to plants: for it is found that they run up sickly, long stalks, when confined.

12.

Children should be taught to feel deference, not to practise submission.

13.

It is always a proof of false refinement, when a fastidious taste overpowers sympathy.

14. Lust

14.

Lust appears to be the most natural companion of wild ambition ; and love of human praise, of that dominion erected by cunning.

15.

“ Genius decays as judgment increases.” Of course, those who have the least genius, have the earliest appearance of wisdom.

16.

A knowledge of the fine arts, is seldom subservient to the promotion of either religion or virtue. Elegance is often indecency ; witness our prints.

17.

There does not appear to be any evil in the world, but what is necessary. The doctrine of rewards and punishments, not considered as a means of re-
4 formation,

formation, appears to me an infamous libel on divine goodness.

18.

Whether virtue is founded on reason or revelation, virtue is wisdom, and vice is folly. Why are positive punishments?

19.

Few can walk alone. The staff of Christianity is the necessary support of human weakness. But an acquaintance with the nature of man and virtue, with just sentiments on the attributes, would be sufficient, without a voice from heaven, to lead some to virtue, but not the mob.

20.

I only expect the natural reward of virtue, whatever it may be. I rely not on a positive reward.

The justice of God can be vindicated
by

by a belief in a future state—but a continuation of being vindicates it as clearly, as the positive system of rewards and punishments—by evil educating good for the individual, and not for an imaginary whole. The happiness of the whole must arise from the happiness of the constituent parts, or this world is not a state of trial, but a school.

21.

The vices acquired by Augustus to retain his power, must have tainted his soul, and prevented that increase of happiness a good man expects in the next stage of existence. This was a natural punishment.

22.

The lover is ever most deeply enamoured, when it is with he knows not what—and the devotion of a mystic
has

has a rude Gothic grandeur in it, which the respectful adoration of a philosopher will never reach. I may be thought fanciful; but it has continually occurred to me, that, though, I allow, reason in this world is the mother of wisdom—yet some flights of the imagination seem to reach what wisdom cannot teach—and, while they delude us here, afford a glorious hope, if not a foretaste, of what we may expect hereafter. He that created us, did not mean to mark us with ideal images of grandeur, the *baseless fabric of a vision*—No—that perfection we follow with hopeless ardour when the whisperings of reason are heard, may be found, when not incompatible with our state, in the round of eternity. Perfection indeed must, even then, be a comparative idea—but the wisdom, the happiness

pinels of a superior state, has been supposed to be intuitive, and the happiest effusions of human genius have seemed like inspiration—the deductions of reason destroy sublimity.

23.

I am more and more convinced, that poetry is the first effervescence of the imagination, and the forerunner of civilization.

24.

When the Arabs had no trace of literature or science, they composed beautiful verses on the subjects of love and war. The flights of the imagination, and the laboured deductions of reason, appear almost incompatible.

25.

Poetry certainly flourishes most in the first rude state of society. The passions speak most eloquently, when they are not shackled by reason. The
sublime

sublime expression, which has been so often quoted, [Genesis, ch. 1, ver. 3.] is perhaps a barbarous flight; or rather the grand conception of an uncultivated mind; for it is contrary to nature and experience, to suppose that this account is founded on facts—It is doubtless a sublime allegory. But a cultivated mind would not thus have described the creation—for, arguing from analogy, it appears that creation must have been a comprehensive plan, and that the Supreme Being always uses second causes, slowly and silently to fulfil his purpose. This is, in reality, a more sublime view of that power which wisdom supports: but it is not the sublimity that would strike the impassioned mind, in which the imagination took place of intellect. Tell a being, whose affections and passions have been more exercised than his reason,

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son,

son, that God said, *Let there be light!* and *there was light*; and he would prostrate himself before the Being who could thus call things out of nothing, as if they were: but a man in whom reason had taken place of passion, would not adore, till wisdom was conspicuous as well as power, for his admiration must be founded on principle.

26.

Individuality is ever conspicuous in those enthusiastic flights of fancy, in which reason is left behind, without being lost sight of.

27.

The mind has been too often brought to the test of enquiries which only reach to matter—put into the crucible, though the magnetic and electric fluid escapes from the experimental philosopher.

28. Mr.

28.

Mr. Kant has observed, that the understanding is sublime, the imagination beautiful—yet it is evident, that poets, and men who undoubtedly possess the liveliest imagination, are most touched by the sublime, while men who have cold, enquiring minds, have not this exquisite feeling in any great degree, and indeed seem to lose it as they cultivate their reason.

29.

The Grecian buildings are graceful—they fill the mind with all those pleasing emotions, which elegance and beauty never fail to excite in a cultivated mind—utility and grace strike us in unison—the mind is satisfied—things appear just what they ought to be: a calm satisfaction is felt, but the imagination has nothing to do—no obscurity darkens

darkens the gloom—like reasonable content, we can say why we are pleased—and this kind of pleasure may be lasting, but it is never great.

30.

When we say that a person is an original, it is only to say in other words that he thinks. “The less a man has
“cultivated his rational faculties, the
“more powerful is the principle of
“imitation, over his actions, and his
“habits of thinking. Most women,
“of course, are more influenced by
“the behaviour, the fashions, and the
“opinions of those with whom they
“associate, than men.” (Smellie.)

When we read a book which supports our favourite opinions, how eagerly do we suck in the doctrines, and suffer our minds placidly to reflect the images which illustrate the tenets we

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have

have embraced? We indolently or quietly acquiesce in the conclusion, and our spirit animates and connects the various subjects. But, on the contrary, when we peruse a skilful writer, who does not coincide in opinion with us, how is the mind on the watch to detect fallacy? And this coolness often prevents our being carried away by a stream of eloquence, which the prejudiced mind terms declamation—a pomp of words.—We never allow ourselves to be warmed; and, after contending with the writer, are more confirmed in our own opinion, as much perhaps from a spirit of contradiction as from reason.—Such is the strength of man!

31.

It is the individual manner of seeing and feeling, portrayed by a strong imagination in bold images that have

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struck

struck the senses, which creates all the charms of poetry. A great reader is always quoting the description of another's emotions; a strong imagination delights to paint its own. A writer of genius makes us feel; an inferior author reason.

32.

Some principle prior to self-love must have existed: the feeling which produced the pleasure, must have existed before the experience.

THE END.

